United Nations S/PV.5841

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5841st meeting

Wednesday, 20 February 2008, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Suescum	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Muharemi
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. Willson
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

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08-24509 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/107, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations. Members also have before them documents S/2007/788, S/2008/44 and S/2008/99, containing three letters dated 31 December 2007, 22 January 2008 and 8 February 2008, respectively, from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1800 (2008).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5842

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5842nd meeting

Wednesday, 20 February 2008, 3.20 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Suescum	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Muharemi
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Demin
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

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08-24515 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Somalia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Duale (Somalia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/113, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1801 (2008).

I now open the floor to members of the Council that would like to make statements after the vote.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We voted in favour of this draft resolution even though we would have preferred that the Council defer taking a decision on this matter until we have received the Secretary-General's report, as requested in resolution 1772 (2007) and once again in a presidential statement later that same year, adopted on 19 December 2007. Instead, we have accepted a compromise through which this Council commits itself to consider the Secretary-General's report as soon as it becomes available in early March 2008. It will be important for the Council to do so, because we have to demonstrate that the Security Council's mandate for maintaining international peace and security applies to Somalia as well.

We expect that the Secretary-General's report in March will provide us with alternative approaches to addressing the situation in Somalia, including the best way to proceed, with the eventual deployment of a United Nations mission in that country. Meanwhile, we all know that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been doing a great job in maintaining peace in Somalia despite its capacity challenges. The problem for AMISOM is not just lack of resources, but also that it was deployed as a stopgap measure until the United Nations takes over.

The African Union Peace and Security Council, in its communiqué of 18 January 2008, has, among other things, stressed the urgent need for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation and reiterated that the United Nations also must provide support to AMISOM. That call was endorsed by the African Union summit, and the Group of African States reiterated the request in a letter dated 12 February 2008 addressed to the president of the Security Council.

The same urgency of the situation in Somalia was also conveyed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in December 2007, when he appealed to this Council to assume its responsibility towards Somalia if the country is not to further deteriorate, causing it to become an even greater threat to international peace and security.

Somalia is in need not only of a peacekeeping presence, but the international community also has an obligation to support the political process that can bring about lasting peace to this country. My delegation remains committed to do whatever we can to make sure

that the people of Somalia are not allowed to suffer any more than they have.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I see no further requests for the floor. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5843

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5843rd meeting

Thursday, 21 February 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Arias	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2008/26)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-24762 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2008/26)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, Slovenia and Timor-Leste, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Santos (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table. The representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/26, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure and an honour for me to introduce the third report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), covering the period from 21 August 2007 to 7 January 2008.

As you know, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, had travelled to New York to brief the Council, but returned to Timor-Leste in the wake of the tragic events of 11 February, when President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão were attacked in Dili. Mr. Khare's presence and good offices during this sensitive period in Timor-Leste were considered essential.

The incidents of 11 February in Timor-Leste shocked the entire international community, as conveyed in the Secretary-General's statement that day. I am pleased to report that since our briefing to the Council following that event, the security situation has remained calm in Timor-Leste. In fact, there have been no further significant security incidents in the country.

I am relieved to report that President Ramos-Horta, while still hospitalized, is in stable condition and that doctors are hopeful that he will make a full recovery.

To ensure public order and to facilitate ongoing security operations to apprehend the perpetrators of the attacks of 11 February, the parliament endorsed the decision to extend the 48-hour state of siege declared on 11 February for an additional 10 days, until 23 February, and that could be extended still more. The state of siege imposes restrictions on night-time movement, a curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. and a ban on public demonstrations. In taking those measures, the Government and parliament have acted with restraint and with full respect for constitutional provisions and human rights.

In close cooperation with UNMIT, the Government has, since the morning of 11 February, shown leadership in carrying out and coordinating security operations. In addition to efforts by the United Nations police and the international security forces —

the latter supplemented by an additional contingent of military and police personnel — the Government of Timor-Leste established, by Resolution No. 3/2008, approved by the Council of Ministers on 17 February, a joint command of the Armed Forces of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) and the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) to undertake security operations during the state of siege. Based on discussions between the Special Representative and the Government and an exchange of letters with the Prime Minister dated 21 February, it has been agreed that those PNTL officers who participate, for a limited period of time, in the operations undertaken by the Joint Command would not be under the direct supervision and responsibility of the UNMIT Police Commissioner, who also serves as interim PNTL general commander, during that period.

All other elements of the supplemental policing arrangement between the Government of Timor-Leste and the United Nations remain unchanged. Within the framework of the Trilateral Coordination Forum, new mechanisms have been established to enhance coordination between the F-FDTL, PNTL, UNMIT police and international security forces. As of 19 February, a daily meeting between the commanders of all four security institutions is being held. Further, as of 18 February, two daily meetings are being held between the UNMIT Police Commissioner and the Commander of the international security forces within the context of a new committee for the coordination of international assistance.

(*spoke in English*)

Immediately following the attacks, Timorese leaders from all parties came together to urge calm, and the country has remained peaceful, including throughout the funeral ceremonies for fugitive Alfredo Reinado and one of his accomplices who died during the attack on the President's residence. The UNMIT police and the PNTL, in coordination with the international security forces and F-FDTL, have remained on high security alert and have launched an investigation into the attacks against the President and the Prime Minister.

Before proceeding with an update on developments since the issuance of the Secretary-General's report, I would like to share some observations on the tragic attacks on the President and the Prime Minister. While the full effect of these events is not yet known, the stability of a State cannot be measured only in terms of the occurrence or absence of outbreaks of violence or emergencies, but also by how the State addresses such challenges. As conveyed in our last briefing, it is reassuring that, following the 11 February events, the Timor-Leste Government, the parliament, all political parties — including in the opposition — security institutions and the population at large responded with calm and restraint and with due respect for the Constitution and the rule of law. What some feared might have deteriorated into a destabilizing crisis did not happen, with the institutions of the State and citizens showing strong resilience. All political leaders of the country and the general population will hopefully continue to refrain from politicizing these terrible events.

Of course, the 11 February incidents raise some serious security-related issues which will need to be addressed. Nevertheless, the course of events over the past 10 days reinforces the importance for UNMIT, in partnership with the Timorese, to continue focusing efforts on the four priority areas outlined in the Secretary-General's report, that is, the review and reform of the security sector, the strengthening of the rule of law, economic and social development and the promotion of a culture of democratic governance.

While the pressing problems of the petitioners are not yet resolved, the group of petitioners that began gathering in Dili two weeks ago in response to the Government's call to pursue discussions on the resolution of their grievances has continued to increase in number, reaching about 155 by mid-week, and more are expected. In the wake of Reinado's death, the Government is intensifying outreach efforts to those who had been his followers to join these discussions, in the hope that the tragic events of 11 February might serve as a turning point in the process.

The visit of the Security Council mission last November and the mid-December visit of the Secretary-General to Timor-Leste reflected the continuing strong support of the international community for the Timorese people, with both being the first such visits since the restoration of the country's independence over five years ago. As had been highlighted by the Security Council, the Secretary-General emphasized that intensified efforts to promote dialogue to defuse existing tensions and foster greater political consensus, as well as the strengthening of inclusive democratic processes, will

be essential for achieving sustainable stability and prosperity in Timor-Leste. Both visits therefore underscored the importance of further progress towards implementation of the commitments made by all parties within the context of the political party accord of 26 May 2007. As members know, the accord specified inclusiveness and participation as basic principles of good governance, as well as the need to ensure a meaningful and constructive role for the opposition in parliament and the participation of civil society in the political, economic and social development process of the country.

It is promising that, since those high-level visits, serious efforts in this direction have been undertaken under the leadership of President Ramos-Horta, who curtailed his official visit to Brazil by a few days to return to Dili on 3 February.

In a 17 January meeting, President Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister Gusmão, FRETILIN President Lu-Olo Guterres and FRETILIN Secretary-General Alkatiri had constructive discussions on the establishment of possible mechanisms for promoting more inclusive approaches for addressing the country's pressing problems. On 7 February, the President convened another meeting, at his home, between the leaders of the four parties comprising the Government coalition, the Alliance for a Parliamentary Majority (AMP) and FRETILIN to further discuss mechanisms for collaboration to jointly address such pressing problems as the internally displaced persons (IDPs), the petitioners and the then fugitive Reinado, as well as critical longer-term issues of security sector review and reform and strengthening of the justice sector and of public administration.

By all accounts, that 7 February meeting was another positive step forward, with the parties reaching consensus on the desirability of such a mechanism and looking forward to further talks the following week. In a letter to the Secretary-General on 7 February, FRETILIN Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri positively referred to progress made in those discussions and the efforts of all concerned to foster an inclusive and participatory environment to enable the country to move forward. President Ramos-Horta himself has played a crucial role in bringing the parties together, and I hope that the parties will continue to come together to keep the positive momentum going while he is recovering. UNMIT will continue with its good offices to facilitate that process.

Constructive efforts were made by the President of the National Parliament, Fernando "La Sama" de Araújo, to promote the establishment of an ad hoc all-party parliamentary commission to address the pressing issues of the IDPs and the petitioners. UNMIT supported those efforts and, while this particular initiative has for the time being been overtaken by events, UNMIT will continue to support all such initiatives to enhance inter-party cooperation.

Other mechanisms established earlier have also been utilized to promote dialogue on critical issues facing the country, notably, the weekly bilateral meetings of the Special Representative, respectively with the President, the Prime Minister and the Secretary-General of FRETILIN, as the party with the largest number of seats in parliament; the Special Representative's regular meetings with the President of the National Parliament, leaders of political parties and civil society; and the fortnightly meetings of the High-Level Coordination Committee and the Trilateral Coordination Forum. At the request of FRETILIN, the Special Representative also hosted a meeting on security sector review and reform for the party's leadership on 6 February, during which agreement was reached to hold fortnightly working-level meetings to exchange views and contribute to the process.

As reflected by resolution 1704 (2006), the mandated tasks of UNMIT are wide-ranging — understandably so, given the multifaceted challenges confronting Timor-Leste. In that connection, let me briefly touch upon some of the key issues raised in the Secretary-General's report. Security sector reform is a long-term process that must be approached in a holistic manner, taking account of a wide range of factors. Broad input of civil society into the security sector reform process will contribute to a sense of public ownership needed to support the further development of security forces, which act in an impartial manner with due respect for human rights. The Government-led and United Nations-supported country-wide survey to ascertain the views of the Timorese population on the security sector is a vital element to ensure the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders.

As emphasized in the Secretary-General's report, following the 2007 elections the UNMIT police has devoted increasing attention to the reform and rebuilding of the national police. With the completion of the screening process, UNMIT police has focused more on the professional development of individual

PNTL officers through training and mentoring, as well as on the institutional strengthening of the PNTL as an impartial, professional and reliable service. I would like to reiterate the need for police-contributing countries to provide officers with the required expertise in training and mentoring, including women officers, which is also important in view of the high incidence of gender-based violence in the country. I would also note that the ratio of women officers within the PNTL is four times that of the UNMIT police. Until the PNTL has more fully developed its capacities, a continued strong UNMIT police presence, including the four formed police units, will be essential to ensure stability in order to build on the gains made over the course of the current mandate period.

On 4 February, PNTL assumed command of three police posts in Dili under the continued supervision and guidance of UNMIT police, who remain stationed in those posts, though in reduced numbers. The outcome of that pilot handover and lessons learned will be taken into account in proceeding with the gradual phased transfer of law enforcement responsibility to the PNTL throughout the country. As outlined in the Secretary-General's report, the progress of the phased transfer will depend in part on increasing capabilities of individual PNTL officers through consistent and structured mentoring processes, as well as physical co-location. As police posts, and eventually districts, are handed over to the PNTL, UNMIT police officers, within the authorized strength, will be progressively deployed to sub-districts and specialized units — such as the Border Patrol Unit — which currently do not benefit from their full-time presence. The expert mission which will travel to UNMIT in late March to conduct a thorough assessment of PNTL requirements, as well as possible adjustments needed to UNMIT police skill sets, will be crucial for further refining those initiatives.

While the reform and rebuilding of the PNTL is a process that will take some years, progress over this year will be critical in determining the direction and strategies to be followed over the long term. In going forth with assistance to rebuild the PNTL, UNMIT police efforts must be part of a larger holistic strategy developed by the Timor-Leste Government in coordination with the broader international community, whose bilateral assistance will also remain essential in the medium and long terms. As with any UNMIT mandated tasks, the understanding and support of the Timorese population are an important and key element for success. To that end, in January the UNMIT Police Commissioner and other senior police officers participated in a series of public outreach meetings with civil society groups across the country.

The Timorese police service is one component of the larger rule of law architecture that includes the courts, the Office of the Prosecutor-General, public defenders and the corrections system, as well as the legal framework, all of which are in need of enhanced international support if the increasing backlog of cases is to be tackled and the credibility of the justice system bolstered in the eyes of the Timorese people.

To ensure access to justice, to determine the truth, to establish credible accountability for crimes committed, to provide compensation for victims and to establish proper precedents for the future are all vital elements that remain of paramount concern. As a positive step in that direction, UNMIT and the Timor-Leste Government signed on 12 February an agreement concerning United Nations assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor-General to complete outstanding investigations of the former Serious Crimes Unit. Investigations have already begun. Despite constraints faced by the judicial system, notable progress is also being made in implementing the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry report. UNMIT also remains prepared to provide assistance to the Government and Parliament regarding the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation of Timor-Leste.

Even though UNMIT's mandated tasks do not directly include assistance for the further development of the Armed Forces of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), it will be crucial for the cohesive functioning of the security sector as a whole to further strengthen its institutional capacities, policies and processes. Furthermore, the development of cooperative relations and trust between the PNTL and F-FDTL is vital to improve inter-operationability between those security institutions, as well as for the progressive assumption of law enforcement responsibility by the PNTL. Sustained international support will thus be important for the continued efforts of the F-FDTL command, under the leadership of Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak, to further develop the Armed Forces so that they can discharge their military role appropriately for a peacetime setting.

Timor-Leste faces two interlinked humanitarian challenges: the resolution of the situation of the remaining 100,000 IDPs throughout the country, with 30,000 in camps in Dili, and addressing longer-term and chronic vulnerabilities that may have a direct humanitarian impact on the overall population. The IDP situation is a political and security concern, as well as a humanitarian one, and largely considered as neither short term nor easily fixed. On 12 January, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Khare joined President Ramos-Horta, President of the National Parliament Fernando de Araújo, Prime Minister Gusmão and F-FDTL Commander Ruak in a meeting with the IDPs, which was the first such meeting with the current national leadership. Further, on 25 January, the Prime Minister and Minister for Social Solidarity held a meeting with IDP camp managers. UNMIT has and will continue to actively encourage such initiatives, as well as the appeal of the Prime Minister to the IDPs that all people of Timor-Leste need to rise above partisan politics to resolve such critical issues facing the country.

A durable solution to the IDP situation, through voluntary return or relocation, will require a holistic approach that depends on a number of factors, including, among others, an improved security environment, a strengthened legal framework for resolving land and property disputes, and economic regeneration and livelihood activities. As mentioned earlier, I am pleased that, as a first step forward in the transition from blanket food assistance towards targeted assistance to the vulnerable, food rations distributed to the IDPs have been reduced as of February by 50 per cent without any major security incident, although just over half of the beneficiaries have refused the reduced rations.

The chronic and longer-term vulnerabilities in the country include its susceptibility to natural disasters. Just this past month, parts of the country were hit by severe storms. According to the Disaster Operations Centre, over 700 houses were damaged or destroyed. Those events, and a locust infestation, also caused significant crop damage that may have implications for food security. The United Nations and other international partners assisted the Government in an assessment of and response to the damage, but the country needs to strengthen its institutional capacities for dealing with such events. Other factors, including chronic food insecurity, can also adversely affect the humanitarian situation. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme estimate that 20 per cent of the population is food insecure and that a further 23 per cent is highly vulnerable to becoming food insecure.

Furthermore, rural livelihoods are fragile and create the potential for migration to urban areas ill-prepared to deal with expanding populations.

Short- and medium-term employment programmes continue to be desperately needed. Despite the country's considerable oil revenues, the existing legislation regarding the management of the petroleum development fund limits the amount of resources that can flow to the State budget and does not allow for front-loading of expenditures, as might be required to kick-start the economy and address urgent socio-economic issues.

In his report to the Council, the Secretary-General noted that the functioning of the parliament, the Government and other State institutions demonstrated progress in building on the gains of the peaceful electoral process, as well as a commitment to restore normalcy following the 2006 crisis. The Secretary-General also emphasized the need to address critical political and security-related issues through inclusive and collaborative processes, and the importance of a meaningful and constructive role for the opposition.

Let me say in conclusion that, confronted by the tragic events of 11 February, the Government, the parliament and the opposition acted in an exemplary manner, and State institutions did indeed function according to the constitution. That is indeed encouraging. But the fact that Timor-Leste came so close to a real breakdown shows how important and urgent it is to address a number of issues: the remaining Reinado supporters, who are under arrest warrants; the petitioners; and the internally displaced persons.

Those pressing issues have been unresolved since the crisis of 2006. Each, in and of itself, should be solvable with a concerted effort across the political spectrum. Recent efforts led by President Ramos-Horta — to which I have referred — to bring together FRETILIN and the Government coalition were promising and need to continue. Solving those immediate issues will allow the country to give its full attention to the core underlying socio-economic

challenges — in particular widespread poverty and massive youth unemployment — that, if not addressed, will continue to threaten the political stability of Timor-Leste

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his important briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Santos (Timor-Leste): First, allow me to convey to the Council the regrets of Deputy Prime Minister José Luis Guterres, who had travelled to New York last week to attend this debate. But, as we all know, the incidents of 11 February compelled his early return to the country.

After the comprehensive and insightful presentation by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, and given the constraints of time, I shall read out only part of my statement. The full text will be circulated in the Chamber.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, allow me to express our gratitude for the convening of emergency meeting immediately following the attempted assassination of the President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Timor-Leste (see S/PV.5833). That was indeed a tragic event and an attack against the democratically elected leaders of my country.

Subsequent to the failed attacks, the Government took measures to capture the perpetrators and bring them to justice, in strict observance of our constitution and domestic laws. The Government is fully committed to adhering to the highest standards of human rights in its efforts to resolve the situation. An investigation is under way to ascertain the facts that led to the attempted assassination of the President and the Prime Minister.

In addition, allow me to inform the Council that President Ramos-Horta is under excellent medical care in Darwin, Australia, and is on the road to recovery. On behalf of President Ramos-Horta and his family, I wish to convey their gratitude for, and acknowledgement of, the thousands of messages of sympathy and good wishes they have received from all corners of the world. In particular, I wish to thank the Secretary-General, representatives of Member States, members of the Secretariat and all others who have expressed their solidarity and good wishes.

We profoundly thank the Australian Government for attending, through the International Security Forces, to the President's immediate medical needs in Dili, and for providing the best medical care possible, which promptly enabled his clinical stabilization. Without that treatment, the outcome could have been far more tragic for the people of Timor-Leste. We would also like to thank the Government of Australia, and in particular Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Foreign Minister Stephan Smith, for responding immediately to our request for increased security measures in Timor-Leste.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our good friend Ambassador Kumalo for his leadership of the core group on Timor-Leste. In response to a speech delivered in February 2007 by then Prime Minister Ramos-Horta in this very Chamber, Ambassador Kumalo stated that Timor-Leste might not be the centre of the universe, but that for South Africa, Timor-Leste was indeed the centre of the world. A year later, we know that Ambassador meant exactly what he said.

Last November, my country was honoured with a visit by a Security Council mission, led by Ambassador Kumalo. A few weeks later, another high-level visit was conducted by the Secretary-General himself. Those two visits demonstrated the continuing commitment and support that Timor-Leste enjoys from the United Nations and the international community five years after the restoration of independence. Moreover, both visits provided an ideal opportunity to engage with local stakeholders while at the same time experiencing at first hand developments and challenges facing our nascent democracy. The positive impact of the two visits is evident.

A continued United Nations presence remains crucial for consolidating peace and security, as well as for highlighting our collective role and responsibility in resolving the causes of the crisis. At the same time, we need to thwart the perception that we are becoming too dependent upon the international community to solve our own internal problems.

My Government expresses its profound appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2008/26), as well as to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his insightful presentation. The Government of Timor-Leste fully accepts and strongly supports the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's

report. The extension of the mandate for a year, maintaining the same broad objectives and the current strength, meets the needs and expectations of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste.

As reflected in the report of the Secretary-General, the root causes of the 2006 crisis in Timor-Leste still need to be addressed. We agree that Timorese leaders must put aside their political differences and focus on resolving the manifold challenges facing the country, including the challenges of the internally displaced persons and petitioners. The future of our country depends largely upon resolving the root cause of the crisis.

The current Government took office six months ago, with an agenda to reform and develop the country. We have made significant advances in rebuilding our institutions — the police and the judiciary in particular. Although slow, that progress affirms our commitment to rebuilding our own capacity. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste has been an invaluable enabling factor. But the success or failure of our objectives rests entirely with us, not with the international community. Needless to say, the Council's ongoing support in the crucial areas of democratic governance, socio-economic development, the rule of law and security sector reform greatly increases our chances.

In conclusion, in my country we differ in our political views — which is rather normal and is a part of our young democracy. But we are united in our recognition of the invaluable contribution of the United Nations and the need for its continued and sustained presence in the country. Resolving our problems will take time, and time is crucial for consolidating the peace and stability achieved thus far, so that development can replace the air of uncertainty that many of us feel today.

Finally, allow me to express our utmost gratitude and sincere appreciation to the men and women of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, under the able leadership of our friend Mr. Atul Khare, for their dedication and sacrifices. We congratulate them for doing such an excellent job.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Ambassador Santos for updating the Council.

The United States deplores the recent attacks on President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão by the rebel group associated with dissident Alfredo Reinado. They constituted an unacceptable assault on the Timorese Government.

We welcome the decision of Australia, in response to this crisis, to send 200 additional troops to strengthen the International Security Forces an addition that has provided a backbone for efforts to restore and maintain stability in the area. We also thank Australia for its full medical and military support.

These recent attacks underscore the necessity of achieving accountability for the 2006 crisis. That is central to establishing law in Timor-Leste. To meet that goal, we encourage implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, including bringing those responsible for crimes to justice under domestic law.

We concur with the Secretary-General's recommendation of a one-year extension of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), as composed at present. UNMIT is playing a vital role in ensuring and restoring stability in Timor-Leste. We will depend on UNMIT to continue its support for the Timorese in developing the capacity of the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL), achieving accountability for the 2006 crisis and strengthening the justice sector in the coming year.

The recent past underscores the importance of developing professional and effective police and military forces under civilian control, in order to provide the security necessary for political stability and economic development. In that regard, we appreciate UNMIT's ongoing efforts to promote security sector reform. With a view to long-term stability and growth, we appreciate UNMIT's efforts to develop the effectiveness of the Timorese justice system and encourage additional assessments of justice sector needs.

Despite recent challenges, it will be important for UNMIT to retain its welcome focus on the prevention of gender-based violence and attention to the needs of victims.

Finally, we join the Secretary-General in calling for reconciliation among Timorese political leaders and parties and for coordination in addressing the challenges facing the country. We express our appreciation for Special Representative Khare's efforts to facilitate such a dialogue.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): As members are aware, Croatia has aligned itself with the European Union statement on this topic. Nevertheless, we would like to make some additional remarks.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the democratic presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007 and reaffirm our support for the new Government. However, we are deeply concerned about the ongoing fragile situation, especially in the light of last week's events. We strongly condemn the recent assassination attempt on Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, and the attack on the convoy of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão.

In that regard, we also have unique insight into this matter through our engagement in the United Nations police in East Timor. We stress that it is important that all parties fully cooperate in the investigations so that those responsible for this attack can be brought immediately to justice.

This only demonstrates the importance of continued coordination efforts among the Timorese leadership, the political parties and civil society to bridge existing gaps. Such efforts are crucial to maintain stability and to strengthen democratic governance and respect for the rule of law. We recognize the value of coordinated work to review the future role of the security sector, given its importance for long-term stability.

We would also like to emphasize the significance of establishing accountability for crimes committed during the 1999 and 2006 crises. We welcome the important progress in the promotion and protection of human rights that has been achieved in a number of areas. However, we are concerned about still-inadequate standards in combating domestic and gender-based violence and the peaceful return of internally displaced persons. In that regard, we encourage the international community to assist the Government of Timor-Leste in strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

In that connection, we would also like to express support for the Secretary-General's initiative to send an expert mission to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which will provide an assessment regarding possible adjustments to UNMIT's police component. We support the efforts of Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, and the continuation of the Integrated Mission to build on the progress achieved thus far. The mission's presence is crucial in order to encourage the East Timorese Government to address existing challenges.

Therefore, we firmly and strongly support an extension of UNMIT's mandate for the next 12 months.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): First, I would like to thank Ambassador Nelson Santos, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for his statement. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing on the situation following the attacks on the President and the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, and for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26).

The report indicates that, in the context of the many difficulties that they are facing in the first year of the new Government and parliament, the people and the public institutions of Timor-Leste have made many efforts in their nation-building and recovery processes. However, the report also indicates that progress is limited: apart from that made in the performance of parliament, the Government and other State institutions in the areas of policymaking and political debates, little can be found in other domains of activity.

We agree that Timor-Leste continues to face numerous challenges, as noted by the Security Council mission that visited the country last November. The recent attacks targeting the President and the Prime Minister — attacks that members of the Council have strongly condemned — tell us only that, while there has been overall improvement, the security situation and the political situation remain fragile. That, combined with the weakness of institutions and the lack of cooperation among political leaders and parties, makes the task of tackling, on a daily basis, pressing problems such as widespread poverty and unemployment, the housing crisis, the great number of internally displaced persons and crime even more challenging.

In expressing our support for and solidarity with the people and the Government of Timor-Leste — and mindful of the observation of the Security Council mission that, unless the differences among the Timorese leaders are resolved, political uncertainty will persist, together with the prospect of renewed violence and bloodshed — we call upon all parties concerned to exercise restraint and to actively engage in peaceful dialogue to address differences, together promoting the process of national reconciliation and development, in the national interest of Timor-Leste and in the interest of peace and stability in the region.

In the context of the present situation, we consider that the continued assistance of the international community is necessary. The visits of the Secretary-General and the Security Council mission have reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to Timor-Leste at this critical moment. In that regard, we commend the efforts of UNMIT and various United Nations agencies in support of the peace and development process in Timor-Leste over the past year in the many fields of their activities.

At the request of the Government of Timor-Leste, and upon the recommendation of the Secretary-General, Viet Nam supports an extension of UNMIT's existing mandate in order to enable it to accomplish its tasks. We welcome UNMIT's plan for a phased handover of policing responsibilities to the National Police Force of Timor-Leste in order to enhance the capacity of the Timorese authorities in maintaining security with a view to long-term stability.

Before concluding, let me once again, on behalf of my Government, extend to President José Ramos-Horta our best wishes for a quick and full recovery to allow him to resume leadership of the country at an early date, consolidate peace and implement the national strategy for recovery.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for his informative briefing, and the Secretary-General for his report. My delegation also deeply appreciates the important statement by the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, Ambassador Nelson Santos.

The recent news of the armed attacks against President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão causes us profound concern and pause. We hope that President Ramos-Horta makes a swift recovery and will be able to resume his duties at an early date.

We unreservedly condemn those attacks. They constitute nothing less than an assault on Timor-Leste's democracy. We praise the quick and effective actions taken by the leadership of Timor-Leste to prevent escalation of this grave situation. The leaders and people of Timor-Leste have demonstrated their wisdom in responding to the situation by exercising restraint in their actions in the interest of maintaining peace and stability. These latest deplorable events underscore the need for the continued support and engagement of the international community.

The Security Council mission to Timor-Leste last November and the visit by the Secretary-General provided us with a window into the current situation there and a lucid and candid assessment of the key concerns and issues that the country is facing. Together with the current report of the Secretary-General, they provide a basis for us to recalibrate the priorities and approaches of the United Nations Mission's programmes and activities in the country to better suit the current realities and help reverse the setbacks that have occurred there since 2006.

By far the most critical issue in the country would appear to be restoring peace and security and building sounder foundations for long-term stability. In this regard, it is extremely important for the United Nations Mission in Dili to continue, as a matter of high priority, to support Timor-Leste in fully addressing the unresolved root causes of the 2006 crisis, including political divisions, weak institutions — especially the national police and the security forces — and poverty and unemployment, especially among the youth.

It is equally important for the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to support the efforts made and the approach adopted by the Government in resolving some grave issues remaining from the 2006 crisis that continue to contribute to the fragility of the security situation in the country, such as internally displaced persons, petitioners and fugitives.

We appreciate the good offices efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to enhance dialogue among the leadership and facilitate a consensus approach in addressing the various problems.

We believe that with the strong determination and untiring efforts made in a united manner by the leadership of Timor-Leste, and with re-energized and more focused assistance from UNMIT and other partners, the serious challenges that the country is facing can be overcome. It is only then that progress made so far in the country's State-building can be consolidated and its economic development reinvigorated.

In practical terms, it is important for UNMIT to focus on supporting the Government's programme on short-term priorities contained in its 2008 budget. Their effective implementation would have durable impact on stabilization in the country. We place importance on UNMIT's continued role in cooperating and coordinating with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other relevant partners in order to support the implementation of the Government's national recovery strategy.

Another important note is the issue of expediting security sector reform. We support the Secretary-General's plan to gradually transfer the responsibility for police operations from the United Nations police to the national police of Timor-Leste and to emphasize training and mentoring assistance from the United Nations police.

There is a great need for UNMIT to support national capacity-building efforts and to shore up the ability of the Government and other State institutions to function in their proper roles. That includes the need to strengthen the full range of political, judicial and economic institutions and infrastructure so that democratic governance can thrive. As a general note, we attach great importance to the concepts of ownership of and leadership by the Government and people of Timor-Leste in the planning and implementation of United Nations assistance in this regard. Therefore, in the light of those considerations, Indonesia supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General for the extension of UNMIT's mandate for a period of 12 months.

We are pleased to inform the Council that Indonesia and Timor-Leste continue to enjoy an excellent bilateral relationship. We also witness continuing superb rapport among leaders of both countries. The Government and people of both countries continue to deepen and expand cooperation on the basis of forward-looking and reconciliatory principles.

In conclusion, we wish to reaffirm my Government's strong commitment to continue to assist Timor-Leste on a bilateral basis in achieving peace, stability, and prosperity for a democratic Timor-Leste.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. Costa Rica welcomes the improvement in the state of health of President Ramos-Horta, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, as was the President of Costa Rica, a situation that was made possible by the very close friendship between them. We hope that he will be able very soon to return to his work in furthering the peace, stability and development of the Timorese people.

We believe that no signs of fanaticism or violence will stand in the way of Timor-Leste as it takes its first steps on the path of independence. The international community should provide the necessary support so that that can be reality. For this reason, this debate is particularly important because it provides us with an opportunity not only to assess the situation in Timor-Leste, but also and especially to consider the role that is being played and should be played by the United Nations in assisting the people and the Government of Timor-Leste.

On the subject of national reconciliation and democracy, the extent of the political differences between the leaders of Timor-Leste regarding the measures necessary to settle critical issues that the country is facing continues to be considerable. Nonetheless, the attitude that has been assumed by the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) following the recent attacks must be recognized as a sign of political and democratic maturity.

We should channel all available energy and resources to take advantage of the moment of political lucidity that has been sparked by the gunshots. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) should promote, with renewed determination, reconciliation and democratic participation.

On the subject of justice, human rights and the rule of law, the sustainability of any political understanding depends to a large extent on the

effective participation of all sectors, including, in the case of Timor-Leste, the so-called petitioners. However, that cannot occur in a situation of impunity, hence the special importance of implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry.

The indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, including the virtues of the rule of law, may become mere empty words when some 40 per cent of the population live in poverty and unemployment and a further 10 per cent have been displaced by the internal violence. That is why the support provided by the international community in general and UNMIT in particular is of such importance. It is not a matter of creating a dependence on the international system; it is a matter of generating national capacity. The Council should reconsider whether the mandate and resources of UNMIT are sufficient to facilitate and promote such capacity-building.

Regarding peacebuilding and development, the absence of Alfredo Reinado could either provide an opportunity or constitute a threat in terms of the peacebuilding process. Taking advantage of the window of opportunity that has been opened by the attacks is the main challenge facing the Timorese authorities and UNMIT. Peace, justice and development, promoted in a parallel — and not successive — manner, are the keys to success.

In that regard, we recall that, a few weeks ago, the Government of Timor-Leste expressed its belief that an UNMIT presence would be needed for a further five years, years that should be devoted in particular to promoting stability and strengthening security, leading up to the deployment of a mission with a peacebuilding mandate for approximately three more years. Costa Rica considers it proper that the Council consider that request, once agreements have been reached regarding the current renewal of the UNMIT mandate. We would like the Council to conduct an analysis of the situation that goes beyond the 12-month period for which the mandate's extension is currently being considered. To that end, the Secretary-General should provide an exhaustive report, including options for a successful exit strategy.

Security sector reform, economic development and democracy-building in Timor-Leste will take place only insofar as sufficient guarantees are provided for stability and security. Therefore, flexible and effective security sector reform should continue to be a priority for the Council. Strengthening the police and institutions that contribute to administrating justice are essential requirements.

The stability that has prevailed in Timor-Leste following the attacks against its democratic institutions and against the life of President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão are clear signs of the progress that has already been achieved in this area and of the effectiveness of the United Nations police, in conjunction with the International Stabilization Force. We are grateful to them, and to Australia in particular. However, with a continuous view to building capacity rather than generating dependence, we would like to emphasize the need to expedite the training process and to hand over full responsibility to the Timor-Leste police.

Allow me to conclude, Mr. President, with some thoughts that I am sure that your country, Panama, will share with me, since our two countries are the two members of this Council that do not have a standing military institution. All too often, the hopes and dreams of many generations of men and women all over the world have been sacrificed on the basis of a misguided concept of national security. Costa Rica wonders whether the huge challenges to be overcome by Timor-Leste on the path to building a dynamic and prosperous democracy will be overcome or reinforced with the proposed security sector reform, which includes a national army as a standing institution.

Since the end of the 1990s, Indonesia has been committed to the concept of a sovereign Timor-Leste, with the support of the entire international community. Costa Rica wonders whether we can truly justify the need for a military focus for the security of Timor-Leste. Are the security challenges faced by the people of Timor-Leste of an internal or external nature? What is the most effective and efficient way of dealing with them? How best can we contribute to peace and stability in the region?

Like Timor-Leste, Costa Rica is a small country, and we have decided that our security will not depend on military strength, which would be small in any case, given our economic limitations. Rather, we chose to focus on building democracy and improving the quality of life of our people and promoting respect for the rule of law and human rights. We feel that that is a wise option that Timor-Leste might consider following, and

we respectfully encourage the Council to consider that alternative.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his substantive briefing on the latest developments in Timor-Leste and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) (S/2008/26). We also listened very carefully to the assessments contained in the statement by the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste.

Against the backdrop of a gradual improvement in the security situation, the attacks against the President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, which took place in Dili on 11 February were a dangerous challenge to the legal authority and to the peace process. We firmly condemn those attacks. Those who planned and perpetrated them must be brought to trial.

We would like to wish a speedy recovery to President Ramos-Horta, whom we deeply respect and whose authority is internationally acknowledged.

We are pleased to note that, despite these unprecedented crimes, the country's leadership has demonstrated political responsibility, restraint and professionalism and has been able to keep the situation under control. Great credit for maintaining security and law and order goes to UNMIT and the International Security Forces.

The events of 11 February were a direct outcome of the crisis of May 2006. Promptly eradicating the causes and consequences of this crisis, specifically the problems of the petitioners and the internally displaced persons, would make it possible for Timor-Leste to move towards constructing a democratic society.

We support the core conclusions and recommendations contained the report of the Secretary-General. We believe that the mandate of UNMIT should be extended for one more year. We believe that the efforts of UNMIT should be aimed above all at training a robust and professional national police force, which would then be able gradually to take on primary responsibility for independently maintaining law and order in that country.

International support to Timor-Leste is also needed to help strengthen State institutions, the legal system and economic and social development. In the current situation, it is particularly important to advance the process of national reconciliation in Timor-Leste and to promote dialogue and cooperation among all political forces in the country. The Russian Federation will continue to support the people and the Government of Timor-Leste in their efforts to build a stable and democratic society in their young State.

Mr. Johnston (United Kingdom): We thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26) and Ambassador Santos for giving us so concisely his country's crucial perspective on recent events and on the future.

I would like to begin by associating my delegation with the statement to be delivered later in our debate by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to join colleagues in condemning the attacks on President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão of 11 February. As the Council has made clear, there can be no justification for acts such as those. We expect that the law enforcement authorities will be able to bring those responsible to justice and that stability will thus be maintained in East Timor.

We are encouraged by the Secretariat's assessment that the Timorese State institutions and the opposition have met the challenge posed by those attacks and have responded, as Mr. Guéhenno stated, in keeping with their constitutional and human rights obligations. We commend the people of East Timor for remaining calm and steadfast in such difficult times for their young democracy, and we thank the International Stabilization Force, and particularly the Australian leadership of that force, for coming so swiftly to the assistance of the legitimate Government of East Timor and for reinforcing its presence on the ground to help bolster the security situation. My Government joins others in wishing Mr. Ramos-Horta a full and swift recovery. We are encouraged by what the Ambassador and the Under-Secretary-General said this morning in that regard.

As others have said, these attacks underline the fact that the security situation and the wider situation in East Timor remain fragile, volatile and vulnerable to setbacks. So it is for the people of the country to do everything in their power to ensure the sustained positive trend in terms of politics, security and

sustainable economic and social development. For my Government, that means three things.

First, efforts should continue building a shared vision by the Timorese Government and the opposition, and the civil society more generally, of what kind of country Timor-Leste should be, including by building on the multiparty discussions referred to by the Under-Secretary-General earlier.

Secondly, there needs to be a determined effort by the State institutions, with international support, to build capacity and deliver reform, particularly in the security and justice sectors. We look forward to receiving the findings of the expert mission to be dispatched by the Secretary-General with the aim of carrying out a thorough assessment, in particular in the field of policing.

Thirdly, a commitment by the Timorese Government is needed to the full implementation of the 2008 budget now agreed by the parliament of Timor-Leste.

This Council of the United Nations and the wider international community are committed to help. We heard in this Chamber over the past year, and again this morning, a consistent message from the representatives of Timor-Leste that the Security Council should continue to provide them with support, including through the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), over the years ahead.

We are very sympathetic to this message, and it is for this reason that we support the extension of the UNMIT mandate by 12 months. We think that Special Representative Khare and his team continue to do an excellent job delivering on their mandate, and we welcome and commend South Africa's leadership of this issue in the Council.

At the same time, we also remain mindful of an underlying principle, which is a point that Ambassador Santos also made this morning. That is, the goal of the international community should be to help the people of Timor-Leste stand on their own feet. We therefore think we need a forward-looking and proactive approach that seeks to move beyond stabilization and into sustainable, national-led peacebuilding as soon as we responsibly can.

We therefore hope that in future reports, the Secretary-General and his team will be able to develop a medium-term strategy, with appropriate benchmarks aimed at achieving this end state, and that, of course, in close and continuous consultation with the Government of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): At the outset, I wish to warmly thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. The reasons that keep the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Timorese leaders away from New York are well understood.

Nevertheless, I would like to convey, through the Under-Secretary-General, our full support to the Special Representative for his efforts and to Ambassador Santos, whom I also thank for his intervention. We also convey our most sincere wishes to President Ramos-Horta for a quick and full recovery and a swift resumption of his functions.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered shortly by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

The attacks of 11 February in Dili, which we have strongly condemned, must serve as a warning and as a lesson. The warning is not to take for granted, after the successful completion of the electoral cycle, that the democratic progress of the country has reached the point of no return and will face no further obstacles. The lesson is to carefully consider the requests of the Timorese authorities for a sustained commitment by the United Nations in the current configuration.

Many of the findings of the Security Council mission and of the report of the Secretary-General have been substantiated by the unfolding of the latest events. I refer here to the need to address the root causes of the 2006 crisis, to the importance of a cooperative and substantive political dialogue among all political stakeholders and to the urgency of a thorough review of the security sector arrangements, all with the required assistance of the international community. These must remain the main focus areas for the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which is operating effectively and deserves our strongest support. The complementary action of the international security forces is also to be commended.

We strongly hope that the latest developments will instil a new sense of urgency in the processes of political reconciliation and State-building. We learned that in the aftermath of the 11 February attacks the

reactions of the legitimate institutions, and of the opposition, were exemplary. We also welcome the readiness of the Government of Timor-Leste to accept the additional assistance that the international community, and its neighbours in particular, have immediately offered at this crucial stage.

At the same time, we must bear in mind that national ownership and participation in regional processes remain the only long-term recipes for sustainability. No form of international support can replace the genuine will of the Timorese leaders and people to pursue stability and development, in close cooperation with their neighbours. Obviously, this consideration does not preclude the need for sustained international assistance in the foreseeable future, in a spirit of interdependence, rather than one of dependence, with the ultimate goal being full self-reliance.

For its part, Italy, along with its European Union partners, has constantly supported the young Timorese democracy at all stages of its genesis and development. During the recent visit to Rome of President Ramos-Horta, additional projects were considered with the Italian authorities in the areas of parliamentary support, human resources development and cultural and linguistic cooperation.

In this spirit of friendship, Italy is also ready to support the extension for 12 months of the mandate of UNMIT. I would like to praise UNMIT, in particular for providing a bright example in terms of gender mainstreaming in its activities and reporting.

Finally, I would like to highlight once again that the failure to address impunity for past crimes is the worst enemy of peace and stabilization, as shown by the latest events. It is therefore imperative to ensure justice and accountability for the events of 1999 and 2006, as provided for in relevant Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, Ambassador Santos, for his statement.

China strongly condemns the recent attacks by the rebels on President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão of Timor-Leste. We wish President Ramos-Horta a speedy recovery. We also hope that the Timorese people will keep calm, exercise restraint and do all they can to maintain stability in the country.

Over the past few months, the United Nations has closely followed the situation in Timor-Leste. The Security Council mission and the Secretary-General visited Timor-Leste. The Security Council has also held many in-depth discussions on the situation in that country. Following the attacks, the Security Council immediately issued a presidential statement. All of this fully demonstrates the support of the international community to the process of peacebuilding and reconstruction in Timor-Leste.

During last December's open debate (see S/PV.5801), China stated its position on the situation in Timor-Leste in a comprehensive manner. Here, I wish to emphasize the following points.

First, the leaders of the various Timorese factions should achieve reconciliation through dialogue and address the security problem. The recent attacks have shown that the security situation in the country remains fragile. Apart from the problem of the Military Police Commander, Reinado, the problems of the internally displaced persons and the petitioners pose a threat to the peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

Effectively coping with the security problem, especially in these trying times, requires that the Government, with all its factions, especially FRETILIN, should put behind their past grievances and cooperate fully with each other. China appreciates the fact that, following the attacks, FRETILIN swiftly issued a statement condemning them and calling on the Timorese people to remain calm. We hope that the various Timorese factions will put national stability and the people's interests first and, through dialogue and exchanges of view, increase their mutual trust, overcome their differences, help their people to view the common situation rationally, and seek to address all differences peacefully. The United Nations should continue to play a constructive role in promoting the reconciliation process in the country.

Secondly, maintaining peace and stability in Timor-Leste also requires the joint efforts of the armed forces, the police, the international security forces and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). China appreciates the efforts of the international security forces and UNMIT to maintain security in Timor-Leste, but the recent attacks have sounded an alarm for the international community. We

have seen that gaps remain in the security and protection work being done in Timor-Leste.

China supports the Security Council's extension of UNMIT's mandate. In the next phase, the security forces of Timor-Leste, the international security forces and UNMIT should remain highly vigilant and, while maintaining public security, also strengthen protection for the country's prominent figures. At the same time, those three forces should also keep communications open between them and cooperate with each other so as to optimize their respective advantages.

Thirdly, the long-term stability of Timor-Leste requires the implementation of the Government's working plan and a significant contribution to the development of the country's economy. The Government of Timor-Leste has already formulated this year's budget, as well as a work plan. We hope to see their gradual implementation and, through economic development, the continued improvement of the livelihoods of the people and a reduction in poverty, especially through increased job opportunities, particularly among young people, so as to eliminate the root causes of social instability. In improving the people's livelihoods and standards of living, attention must be paid to promoting development in the various social sectors and to fostering and increasing the people's self-confidence. The international community should provide every possible assistance in support of the efforts of the Timorese Government.

Fourthly, we should take the future tasks and composition of UNMIT into consideration in an integrated manner. As a large portion of the Timorese police are still in the identification, verification and reappointment phase, the peacekeeping personnel of the United Nations remain on the front line of enforcement in some areas. It is clear both from the Security Council's mission and from the Secretary-General's report that certain Government officials and other people remain concerned in that regard.

It is imperative for a variety of reasons gradually to transfer policing responsibilities to the national police of Timor-Leste. While continuing to undertake its policing responsibilities and tasks to ensure public security in Timor-Leste, the United Nations should also help the national police to strengthen its policing capabilities. The United Nations police may wish as a next step to consider refocusing its work on training and sharing its experience with the national police. Following a comprehensive consideration of the rational allocation of United Nations peacekeeping resources, the composition of UNMIT may also be adjusted accordingly.

As a member of the Asia-Pacific family, China has closely followed the situation in Timor-Leste and sincerely hopes that, with the full assistance of the international community, Timor-Leste will maintain its peace and stability and start down the road to development and national prosperity. China will, to the extent possible, maintain its assistance to Timor-Leste.

Mr. Ettalhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Guéhenno for his detailed briefing on the latest developments in Timor-Leste. I also commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and thank him for the information provided in his report.

I also thank Mr. Santos, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations, for his statement, as well as our South African colleague for the critical role his country has played and for its efforts to draw up a draft resolution on extending the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

The report of the Secretary-General refers to progress made in terms of security in Timor-Leste, although the situation remains tenuous, as evidenced by the attacks on the President and the Prime Minister. The attacks sought to harm its immediate victims and the country as a whole, which had only just begun to restore calm and stability following last year's elections. Libya therefore reiterates its firm condemnation of the attacks on the President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. We pray to God for President Ramos-Horta's speedy recovery.

My country shares the Secretary-General's view that the national police force of Timor-Leste requires further support in training and capacity-development if it is to fully shoulder its responsibilities for restoring order, which is under ongoing threat. The Timorese authorities need to develop a comprehensive approach to reforming the security sector in cooperation with UNMIT. That issue is of the highest priority and requires their full attention. We hope that the measures recently taken by the Government in that area, to which Mr. Guéhenno referred, will strengthen security and mark a positive step in that direction.

The Parliament and Government of Timor-Leste worked to ensure the success of last year's elections and the establishment of democratic institutions. While duty-bound to commend those efforts, we remain concerned about the remaining differences because there has been no cooperation between the heads of the political parties, preventing the establishment of an agreed approach to such pending matters as the issue of internally displaced persons and the petitioners of the Timorese armed forces, among others. We therefore call on all Timorese parties to find common ground for launching a dialogue and reconciling so as to overcome the aforementioned differences. I would also like to welcome Mr. Guéhenno's observation that the reaction of all parties and political groups to those deplorable attacks was in full respect for State institutions and for the constitution.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26) referred to several issues that must be addressed: poverty, continuing unemployment and socio-economic problems. There is also a need to improve coordination among security institutions, strengthen the legal framework and operational capacities and exert full control over all forces on the ground. We therefore call on the United Nations and UNMIT to cooperate with local authorities in order to achieve those goals.

We very much appreciate the observations contained in the Secretary-General's report. We, of course, agree with him that efforts must be intensified in order to bolster dialogue, restore calm, ease tensions, bring about national reconciliation, strengthen national institutions and achieve national reconciliation. We also endorse his recommendation that UNMIT's mandate be extended for a further 12 months.

Last but not least, we commend the efforts of Mr. Atul Khare and UNMIT to build up Timor-Leste's national political, economic and security institutions.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We too would like to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for the very thorough and enlightening briefing he has given us on the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) (S/2008/26). We also thank our friend the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste for his enlightening and very informative statement.

The history of the people of Timor-Leste, their struggle for independence and their current admirable efforts to fully regain their sovereignty are an example to us all. They deserve the unwavering support of the international community in helping the country to build its institutions and advance its development. Any obstacle or attempt intended to jeopardize that desire to assume responsibility cannot be tolerated. It is for that reason that the recent attacks against President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão prompted unanimous international indignation and condemnation. In that connection, we cannot fail to commend the action taken by the Government of Australia, which promptly came to the assistance of the legitimate Government of Timor-Leste.

We welcome the notable progress made by Timor-Leste and its firm commitment to building a democratic future, as illustrated by the very successful holding of the recent presidential and legislative elections. That clearly demonstrates a spirit of tolerance, understanding and reconciliation. We hope that that spirit will prevail throughout the entire country in order to promote genuine national reconciliation, including as regards the issue of the petitioners.

We also welcome the Government's drafting and the Parliament's adoption of a development programme as part of the 2008 budget. That will make it possible to address the crucial challenges of security and the situation of internally displaced persons. There are other equally important issues on the agenda, such as the building of a strong national economy, national reconciliation and strengthening security and the rule of law. Nevertheless, one of the main challenges that the Government must urgently address is, in our view and as noted in the report of the Secretary-General, that of combating unemployment, which undermines the future of young people and which can also lead to migration from the countryside. Without jobs and real prospects for the future, there is a significant risk that young people will face dangers and difficulties in life. Those dangers must be avoided, as they could lead to demands and troubles of all sorts. Whatever the difficulties, priority should be accorded to that issue.

Burkina Faso welcomes the Government's signing of an agreement aimed at coordinating national resources and international assistance to promote the country's development. Timor-Leste's donors and partners, especially the countries of the region, should therefore firmly support the Government's programme in order that it can be fully implemented. It is also

important to ensure that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework has the same support.

Governance is a crucial issue for an emerging democracy such as Timor-Leste. We have every confidence that UNMIT and the United Nations system can support and strengthen the republic's institutions, leading to the establishment of genuine democracy based on the rule of law. The risk of instability and the fragility of the political process, which are still real, justify the continued presence of UNMIT to maintain public order and provide support for the justice sector. However, my delegation recognizes that restructuring and appropriate training of the Timorese national police — which must also be depoliticized so that it can assume full — is more necessary than ever. We therefore welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General to assess the needs of the national police, with a view to a gradual transfer of competencies. It goes without saying that Burkina Faso supports the renewal of UNMIT's mandate.

Lastly, we would like to thank Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo for the role his country has played in the core group on Timor-Leste.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I too would like to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste, which the Security Council has followed with particular attention since the attacks against President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão 10 days ago. I would also like to thank Ambassador Nelson Santos, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for his statement.

We were very shocked to learn about the terrorist attacks against the head of State and the Prime Minister, which were aimed at destabilizing the country and undermining the Government's recovery efforts. France once again condemns those attacks against the legitimate and democratically elected authorities of Timor-Leste. At the same time, we commend the constructive response to those developments by Timorese political officials, both in the majority and the opposition. In contrast to what occurred in the spring of 2006, Timorese institutions have continued to function in an environment of legality and cooperation, regularly including the opposition.

My delegation also welcomes the very positive role played by neighbouring countries, especially Indonesia and Australia, whose speedy response provided support to the Timorese authorities and crucially helped to maintain stability in that country. As has been mentioned here, that support included vital medical assistance for President Ramos-Horta. We welcome the encouraging signs regarding developments in his medical condition. France hopes for his speedy and complete recovery.

The events of 11 February serve once again to remind us of the importance of combating impunity for past crimes, both those of 1999 and those of the spring of 2006, as a condition for lasting reconciliation. In that connection, we reaffirm our support for the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to assist the Prosecutor-General of Timor-Leste. Those efforts are fully in line with the mandate given to the mission by the Security Council.

Finally, we believe that in the current circumstances, it is more necessary than ever before to maintain an international security presence in Timor-Leste. The reassuring presence of UNMIT and of the international security forces is an essential element for stability in the country and for the strengthening of its institutions. In that regard, my delegation would like to express once again its appreciation for the work carried out by Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste. I should also like to join preceding speakers in commending Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa for his efforts on Timor-Leste in the Security Council.

Thus, France supports a 12-month extension of UNMIT's mandate. The mandate should be part of a medium-term consolidation strategy formulated by the Secretary-General with a view to gradual Timorese ownership of tasks currently being performed by UNMIT. In that context, my country will continue to support the international community's efforts to achieve development and stability in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate on the situation in Timor-Leste. We also thank His Excellency Ambassador Nelson Santos, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for his informative statement on the situation in his country.

We had hoped to hear directly today from Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão via video link, but in the end

that was not possible. We register our disappointment that we could not do so. But we are very grateful that Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, has given us a comprehensive presentation on the latest events in Timor-Leste and, in particular, on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26).

My delegation is also very appreciative of the dedicated efforts of the men and women of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the entire United Nations team in support of the people and the Government of Timor-Leste, under the leadership of Mr. Atul Khare.

I also want to thank you, Mr. President, for accepting the request of the core group countries that have been supporting Timor-Leste outside the Council to come and join in the debate on this issue today. I think the fact that we have seen representatives of countries outside the Council come here to present their views to us on the situation in Timor-Leste, as they will do later, is an indication that the future of Timor-Leste matters not only to us, but also to the United Nations community as a whole. We thank you for having opened the door for others to participate here.

Like other delegations, we were shocked to learn recently that President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão were attacked on 11 February. We wish President Ramos-Horta a full recovery so that he can continue to lead his country on its path to consolidate democracy and stability. South Africa would like to reiterate its condemnation of those attacks in the strongest possible terms. We further applaud the Security Council for its swift response to that heinous act, not only by convening emergency consultations, but also by adopting a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/5), which sent the word out that the Council is watching the events in Timor-Leste.

We also wish to commend Timor-Leste's neighbouring countries. Timor-Leste has been blessed with neighbours that have been there to assist, especially in its greatest time of need. Those countries include Australia and New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and others, which reacted when these events happened. We particularly wish to thank Australia, which immediately released security forces that went to assist Timor-Leste in its great hour of need. We also wish in particular to recall the very strong political statement by the Government of Indonesia, which also sent out the message that the attack on the democratic institutions of Timor-Leste would not be acceptable at all.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on Timor-Leste is a source of both hope and challenge. On the one hand, it describes a series of significant strides achieved, including the successful holding of presidential and parliamentary elections, the formation of a democratic Government and the general improvement of the security situation in Timor-Leste. On the other hand, the report also highlights, as it should, some of the key political, security and socio-economic challenges facing Timor-Leste, including the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the lack of capacity in key Government institutions.

In paragraph 3 of his report, the Secretary-General correctly notes:

> "The performance of the Parliament, Government and other State institutions in Timor-Leste reflected progress in policymaking and active political debate within democratically sanctioned arenas".

Despite the persisting differences among political leaders and parties in Timor-Leste, we are confident that they will overcome their differences, work together to address priority needs and cooperate on the need to move their country forward.

As Mr. Guéhenno reported, the ongoing dialogue among the leaders of various political parties in Timor-Leste, under the leadership of President Ramos-Horta, is a great step indeed for the future of Timor-Leste. We reaffirm our support for the continued efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to promote dialogue and reconciliation among parties in Timor-Leste through inclusive and collaborative processes. We hope that the meetings of the High-level Coordination Committee and the Trilateral Coordination Forum will produce much-needed dialogue and progress on the key priorities of the country.

As we have stated before, the problems of Timor-Leste — particularly those related to IDPs or the so-called petitioners — cannot be solved by only one party; they can be addressed successfully only by all Timorese, working together collectively.

My delegation welcomes the improvement in the overall security situation in Timor-Leste, owing to the

collective efforts of the national police force of Timor-Leste, UNMIT and other stakeholders. Notwithstanding that progress, the South African delegation believes that reform of the security sector remains urgent and indispensable. Security sector reform should be owned and led by the Government of Timor-Leste and should be supported by the international community.

In that regard, the task of rebuilding the national police force of Timor-Leste remains crucial and is in the interest of achieving long-term stability in the country. My delegation welcomes the considerable progress achieved in the screening and mentoring process for the national police. South Africa welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to send an expert mission to UNMIT in the first quarter of 2008 to conduct a thorough assessment of the requirements of the national police, as well as possible adjustments to UNMIT in order to improve police skills.

In paragraph 61 of his report, the Secretary-General correctly stresses: "With the manifold challenges ahead, this is a critical moment for the United Nations to reaffirm its continued commitment to Timor-Leste". We, too, believe that the continued presence of the United Nations in Timor-Leste is essential to address the multifaceted challenges facing the country, including political, institutional and security aspects.

We wish to thank the Council for having agreed to extend the mandate of UNMIT for a period of 12 months in order to work in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste to strengthen stability, promote democratic governance and political dialogue and foster national and social cohesion. UNMIT's commitment to Timor-Leste was illustrated in the successful organization and conclusion of presidential and parliamentary elections in the country. Now the hard work remains: the country has to rebuild and strengthen its own democracy.

Nevertheless, further efforts are needed to focus UNMIT's supportive role on other post-electoral priority areas, including the strengthening of capacities in the judicial system, support for strengthening security institutions and support for dialogue and reconciliation. Equally important, bilateral and international support would prove invaluable in capacity-building and in the strengthening of various sectors of the State.

In view of the factors I have just mentioned and the continued need for Timor-Leste to count on the support of the international community, in particular the United Nations system, at this critical stage of its nation-building process, South Africa strongly supports the Secretary-General's proposal. We again wish to thank the Council for having accepted that the mandate of UNMIT should be extended for a further 12 months at the present composition and strength. We also call upon the broader international community to stay the course in Timor-Leste.

In conclusion, we encourage the Government, the political parties and the people of Timor-Leste to utilize the support and presence of UNMIT. As I have reminded the people of Timor-Leste, UNMIT's stay is not endless. So they must use it to the best of their ability now. I am glad that the Council has made it available to them for the next 12 months. We hope that UNMIT can be there to strengthen democracy and to help the people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would like first of all to express my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno and to our colleague the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste for their clear briefings.

I would also like to state that my delegation fully endorses the statement that will be made shortly by my Slovenian colleague on behalf of the European Union.

With an eye to the effectiveness of our work, I will read only part of the text of my statement; copies of the full text have been distributed.

At this difficult time for Timor-Leste, my delegation would like to express its full support to it in restoring stability. We would also like to pay tribute to President José Ramos-Horta, who has sought by all means to bring about a negotiated solution. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Belgium welcomes the fact that, despite this attack against men who embody the democratically elected institutions, the Timorese institutions have continued to operate and provide continuity. In the past, we have repeatedly underscored how important it is that the parties present a united front against the challenges the country is facing. The position of the parliament and of the opposition is, in this context, to be welcomed. We welcome the 14 February joint statement by the heads of all of the political parties, in

which they condemned together the attacks of 11 February and agreed that the perpetrators must be arrested and tried.

Last week's attacks are a tragic illustration of how essential it is that the recommendations of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry on the events of 2006 be effectively implemented. Impunity is not a solution. It is most praiseworthy that the Timor-Leste authorities sought to achieve the surrender of Alfredo Reinado and of his group. Unfortunately, the path of negotiations failed. Everything must be done to bring about the arrest and trial of those responsible for crimes of the past. The fight against impunity is a prerequisite for bringing about reconciliation and sustainable peace. With respect to last week's attacks also, justice must follow its course.

Other consequences of the 2006 crisis persist; they call for resolute action from the Government and for the full support of the international community. The plight of the petitioners was on the verge of being resolved. We fully encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to continue the negotiations that had begun.

Another of those consequences is the high number of displaced persons; they represent more than 10 per cent of the population of the country. Beyond the material considerations, their return to their home villages is closely tied to a sense of security and justice with respect to the 2006 crisis.

But we should not focus solely on the consequences of the 2006 crisis. To avoid any further risk, the causes of the crisis must also be resolved. One of those causes, as we know, lies in the weakness of the institutions, in particular the security sector.

In this framework, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) needs to continue with training and monitoring the national police, while continuing to maintain law and order. We welcome the fact that the transfer of responsibilities in this area from UNMIT to the national police has already begun in a number of neighbourhoods in Dili. Furthermore, we encourage the Government to make full use of UNMIT's expertise with respect to comprehensive security sector review.

The diversity and multiplicity of the challenges that the country faces call for renewed commitment by the United Nations. Here, Belgium fully supports the extension of UNMIT's mandate for a period of 12 months. We have every confidence that this renewed presence will be able — and here I quote the Secretary-General and paraphrase our colleague from Timor-Leste — "to support Timorese-owned solutions" (S/2008/26, para. 61).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Panama.

I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. My thanks go also to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), represented by Mr. Atul Khare, for its efforts, and to South Africa for its interest, reflected in a variety of actions. The concern and endeavours of Australia, Indonesia and other countries of the region during these difficult times for Timor-Leste are also to be acknowledged.

Today, we recognize the progress made by Timor-Leste and UNMIT in 2007. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26) highlights, among other things, the holding of elections, the security sector reform and the building of democratic institutions. We could list other areas of progress.

However, despite the calm that has prevailed in Timor-Leste following the recent attacks against two high representatives of the legitimate institutions, the attacks show that a long road remains to be travelled to address and remedy the causes of the conflict. We note, furthermore, that in recent years the members of the Council have acknowledged the wide range of activities required to achieve these ends, many of which do not fall within the traditional concept of peacekeeping. This is a good time to recognize that fact. The Charter of the United Nations lays down, as one the Organization's purposes, the maintenance of international peace and security and grants to the Security Council the prime responsibility for that function. At the time, the immediate concern of the authors of the Charter was disputes between States. In the post-war world that goal of maintaining peace meant peace between States.

However, a constitutive charter — and the United Nations Charter is one — should develop in keeping with the needs of the times, or it ceases to be a living document and may well become a dead letter. The Charter should, moreover, be interpreted as a whole. Its

principles include protection of human rights and promotion of development. The concepts of peace and security should therefore be interpreted as something more than just the absence of war or armed conflict.

The experience of Timor-Leste is an example of the importance of this conceptual evolution as regards peacekeeping. UNMIT is not the first time that the United Nations has sought to tackle problems in that region. Today, more than ever, it is clear that the priorities of UNMIT's future mandate should include not just the maintenance of peace and security but also should attend to political, institutional, humanitarian, human rights and sustainability aspects, because without them, peace and security will remain elusive. Consolidating dialogue and reconciliation, deepening reform of the justice and security sectors, resolving the problem of internally displaced persons and promoting economic development are among the various factors that must be dealt with.

In that context, allow me to support and echo the statements of Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica on the need to build capacity and not dependence. He warned in particular about the need to strengthen the armed forces in Timor-Leste as a matter requiring very careful consideration. The experience of Panama and Costa Rica runs counter to such a trend.

Lastly, allow me to repeat that this Council should demonstrate its commitment to Timor-Leste through efforts to deal with problems and projects in a cross-cutting manner. In the various areas of its mandate it should be both flexible and robust and should present clear goals, sufficient to allow the Secretariat, as our executive body, to draft clear, verifiable and immediate goals and eventually to prepare procedures for an orderly and successful withdrawal.

I cannot end without expressing our recognition of the irreplaceable leadership work carried out by President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão and expressing our hopes for a speedy recovery to President Ramos-Horta.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate once again in the Security Council's deliberations on Timor-Leste. We thank the Council for its ongoing support for that country. Today I wish to particularly mention the lead role being played by South Africa, by Ambassador Kumalo especially.

On behalf of my country, I want to again thank the staff of and contributors to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) in the field and Special Representative Khare and Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and his team here at the head office for the leadership they provide. I also want to express my appreciation for the statement today by my friend Ambassador Nelson Santos, on behalf of Timor-Leste.

Australia deplores the shocking attacks on President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão on 11 February. The actions of the perpetrators represent a terrible attack on the democratically elected leadership of one of Australia's nearest neighbours and underscore the continued fragility of the security situation in Timor-Leste. Our thoughts and hopes are with President Ramos-Horta for his ongoing recovery and return to good health.

At the same time, Australia congratulates the Government of Timor-Leste for its careful and measured approach to the events of 11 February, which helped to ensure that the situation remained calm in the immediate aftermath. We call upon the people of Timor-Leste to continue to embrace peace in these difficult times.

As the Prime Minister of Australia, the Honourable Kevin Rudd MP, has made clear, Australia is a steadfast friend and neighbour of Timor-Leste and will continue to be at the forefront of international efforts to assist it to become a stable and more prosperous nation. During a visit to Dili on 15 February, the Prime Minister made clear Australia's commitment to continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with Timor-Leste and to contribute enhanced assistance to help provide security and much-needed longer-term development.

We are supporting Timor-Leste's security directly through our leadership of the international security forces, as well as our contribution of police to the United Nations police. In meeting that security responsibility, I want to acknowledge the cooperation we received from UNMIT and other international partners. I also want in particular to express our

appreciation to New Zealand for its continuing contribution to the international security forces.

As was stated earlier, at the request of the Timor-Leste Government, Australia is providing additional Australian military and police assistance to support Timor-Leste in response to the events of 11 February. Australia is also discussing with Timor-Leste a long-term bilateral approach to strengthening Timor-Leste's own security institutions, and we look forward to liaising closely with the United Nations and other donors in that regard.

As recognized by Ambassador Santos today, the Government and people of Timor-Leste must take the primary responsibility for the development of a stable and more prosperous nation, including through political and economic reform, development of the private sector and provision of health services, education and housing. Australia acknowledges the continuing commitment of Timor-Leste's leaders to addressing those challenges, which Prime Minister Gusmão has been quick to reaffirm in the wake of the events of 11 February. Political reconciliation and support for democratic processes by all political leaders and others in Timor-Leste will be fundamental to a secure and prosperous future. That is a challenge we hope UNMIT can continue to address, although ultimately it is a responsibility for the leaders and people of Timor-Leste. Australia recognizes the important contribution made by UNMIT to supporting democratic reform and political consolidation in Timor-Leste.

The events of 11 February emphasize how important it is for Timor-Leste to continue to work to strengthen its justice system as a basis for long-term stability. Any perceptions of impunity for those who commit crimes threaten to undermine the Timorese people's confidence in their justice system. Australia welcomes the efforts of the United Nations and other donors to strengthen Timor-Leste's justice system and supports the Secretary-General's recommendation for continued endeavours in that vital area.

Tackling the challenges of underdevelopment will be central to stabilizing Timor-Leste's political and security environment. During his visit to Dili on 15 February, the Australian Prime Minister foreshadowed that Australia was looking to provide additional support to help Timor-Leste tackle high levels of unemployment, particularly among youth.

Finally, as a key donor to Timor-Leste and mindful of the broad and complex range of development cooperation taking place, Australia looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste and closely with other donors to ensure a carefully coordinated approach.

It is especially important that the international community, led by the United Nations, continues to support Timor-Leste at this time. Australia welcomes the Secretary-General's report on UNMIT, which recommends a 12-month mandate extension with a continuation of current police levels. A 12-month extension of UNMIT's mandate will provide valuable continuity, certainty and security for Timor-Leste. Importantly, the next 12 months will provide a valuable opportunity for Timor-Leste to implement its hard decisions on the road to reform while it has the support of UNMIT and the international community.

This will be a critical year for the Government of Timor-Leste to move ahead to address the challenges and advance the political, social and economic reforms to which it is committed. Australia is committed to continuing its strong support for Timor-Leste during this difficult but important transition.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): The Philippine delegation commends you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting to deliberate on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26) concerning developments in Timor-Leste and on the recommendations contained therein. We congratulate Panama on a successful presidency of the Council. My delegation also wishes to thank the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste for his profound statement and Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his clear presentation of the report of the Secretary-General.

The Philippines joins other Member States in condemning in the strongest possible terms the attacks on the President and the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste on 11 February 2008. Designed to destabilize the country, the attacks were inimical to the interests of Timor-Leste and its people and affected the gains that have been achieved thus far in Timor-Leste's journey towards democracy along the path of justice, freedom, progress and stability. We are relieved that, despite this serious threat, Timor-Leste has remained calm and that

the dastardly act did not achieve its desired objective. We commend the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the International Security Forces in preserving and maintaining peace and order in the country.

This unfortunate incident also underscores the need for continued engagement by the international community, particularly by the United Nations, in promoting peace, order and stability in Timor-Leste. UNMIT has been performing very well in the execution of its mandate; it should not be made to cease carrying out its mandate. It must be pointed out that all Timorese interlocutors conveyed both to the Security Council mission that visited Timor-Leste last year and to the Secretary-General their desire for UNMIT to remain in the country. Complacency and a false sense of security must not be allowed to diminish the need for UNMIT. The gains earlier achieved under United Nations auspices could have been maintained if the mission had not been prematurely drawn down a few years ago. The continuation of UNMIT is necessary to preserve the gains as well as to support Timor-Leste in addressing the challenges that lie ahead. Thus, the Philippines supports the extension of the mandate of UNMIT for at least 12 months at the current authorized levels. This 12-month extended mandate will provide continuity and stability for the mission and will remove the anxieties to which the people of Timor-Leste are exposed every time a mandate is reviewed for a short period of time. Moreover, the 12-month extension would also provide troop contributors with adequate and sufficient time to plan ahead in their deployments.

The Philippines will continue to support Timor-Leste's nation-building efforts. It will endeavour to improve Philippine troop contributions to UNMIT, quantitatively and qualitatively, as the situation of the Philippines allows. As mentioned before, the Philippines has participated in all United Nations missions in Timor-Leste from the beginning. The Philippines is currently the largest contributor of individual police officers to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and most of those individual police officers are in the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, which is the largest police-led peacekeeping operation the Philippines currently takes part in.

Aside from peacekeeping, the Philippines is also working with other donors in the area of capacity-building, particularly in human resources development. The Philippines remains ready to explore other areas of assistance in order to strengthen Timor-Leste's capacities and institutions. We urge the international community to do likewise.

As we proceed to contemplate the next phase of Timor-Leste's nation-building efforts, the Philippines wishes to highlight the following points raised in the Secretary-General's report.

First, the Philippines fully recognizes that the security sector is crucial for the long-term stability of the country. The events of April and May 2006 and of this month attest to the need to address problems in this area. In view of this, the Philippines supports the continuation of work to comprehensively review the future role and needs of the security sector within the framework of the three-tier coordination structure established in August 2007, which is jointly led by the President, the parliament and the Prime Minister. The Philippines also supports UNMIT efforts to strengthen the Timor-Leste police.

Secondly, the Philippines acknowledges that socio-economic concerns, particularly poverty and unemployment, continue to be major causes of instability in Timor-Leste. It therefore welcomes the commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste to address these concerns, as indicated in its 2008 budget. It hopes that United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and international financial institutions will work closely with the Government of Timor-Leste in supporting the implementation of that budget.

Thirdly, the Philippines continues to encourage dialogue among the political leaders to achieve national reconciliation and political stability. It is only through the fostering of political consensus that differences are resolved without violence and that cooperation is engendered.

Fourthly, the Philippines strongly stresses the importance of Timor-Leste's ownership of the whole process. The international community should take the views, aspirations and sentiments of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste into consideration in any decision to be taken about their country. The visits of the Security Council mission in November and of the Secretary-General in December are commendable

components of the consultation process. Visits of that nature should be encouraged.

In conclusion, the Philippines continues to assert and maintain that Timor-Leste is still one of the best examples of a successful enterprise made possible through the combined cooperative efforts of the United Nations, regional players and other partners. This success must be nurtured and preserved through the continuing vigilance and support of the international community.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call now on the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Ukraine, align themselves with this declaration.

First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. I would like also to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing as well for his frank assessment of the situation. The European Union highly appreciates the valuable work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and in particular that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Atul Khare. I wish further to thank the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste for his statement today.

The European Union is following the situation in Timor-Leste with deep concern. The EU firmly condemns the assassination attempt on Timor-Leste's President, José Ramos-Horta, and the attack on the convoy of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. Those actions only strengthen the EU's firm determination to support Timor-Leste's democratically elected leaders, its institutions and its sustainable development in order to protect its future.

There can be no doubt that the perpetrators of the attacks of 11 February aimed at the core of the legitimate institutions of Timor-Leste and sought to create a highly volatile security situation that would endanger the achievements that Timor-Leste has made since its independence. It is encouraging and therefore a sign of progress in Timor-Leste's post-conflict transition that the Government, the parliament and major political parties, including the opposition leadership, responded appropriately to that crisis and fulfilled their constitutional obligations. It is vital that Government and opposition stay in close dialogue and that all Timorese set aside any differences and work together to address the challenges the country faces and to create a stable and prosperous future for all the people of Timor-Leste.

The situation further underlines the importance of the continued supporting role performed by UNMIT, and the United Nations police contingent in particular. The EU also commends the efforts of The International Stabilisation Force, including its swift action to provide emergency treatment to President Ramos-Horta.

As the report of the Secretary-General underlines, some progress has been observed in terms of a functioning parliament and other State institutions, but many critical challenges remain, as a number of the root causes of the May 2006 crisis have not been fully addressed. Those include political divisions; weak institutions, particularly the security forces; widespread poverty and unemployment, which is especially high among the youth; and the key issue of internally displaced persons.

In his report the Secretary-General mentions positively the role the international community has played in supporting Timor-Leste. For its part, the European Union is determined to continue its active support to Timor-Leste in facing those critical challenges, notably through European Community assistance of over €200 million of ongoing commitments. The imminent upgrade of our presence in Dili through a fully fledged European Community delegation is another sign of the determination of the European Union.

The European Union supports in particular the continued work on a review of the future role and the needs of the security sector and, given the sector's importance for long-term stability, encourages the Government, in close cooperation with UNMIT and the relevant donors, to implement the security sector reform plan.

The EU stresses the importance of ongoing efforts to reach accountability and justice for the events of 1999 and April and May 2006, and calls upon the

Government of Timor-Leste to implement the recommendations of the Special Commission of Inquiry report.

The European Union fully supports the extension of the UNMIT mandate for a further 12 months, as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General. Such an extension would help ensure continuity in stabilizing the country further.

While Timor-Leste's transition is continuing on the right path, the situation will remain fragile and volatile if specific challenges are left unaddressed. There are immediate challenges to face: bringing the perpetrators of the 11 February attacks to justice; resolving the petitioners issue; ensuring reconciliation, accountability and justice for the victims of past violence, notably for the events of 1999 and the crisis of 2006; and alleviating the situation faced by internally displaced persons. There are longer-term challenges: for the Timorese leadership to agree on a shared vision of the way ahead; and to build the capacity of Timorese governance institutions, including in budget performance, poverty alleviation and jobs creation.

Ultimately, success in Timor-Leste is for the people of Timor-Leste to achieve. The European Union, along with the United Nations and other international partners, stands ready to assist the Timorese Government and its people in the critical challenges they face in building the capacity of State institutions, in order to further consolidate peace and democracy in Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): I thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Timor-Leste, Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing and Ambassador Santos for his statement this morning. I join others in expressing New Zealand's deep concern at the recent attacks in Timor-Leste on the President and the Prime Minister. We wish President Ramos-Horta a quick and full recovery.

We commend the people, Government and parliament of Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) for their initial responses to the attacks. We emphasize the importance of continued close cooperation between the Government, UNMIT and the ISF over security operations, in accordance with established procedures. Thankfully, Timor-Leste's two democratically elected leaders survived the attacks, but the attacks have underscored how fragile Timor-Leste continues to be and how easily recent progress could have been undone.

New Zealand strongly supports the recommendation by the Secretary-General to renew the mandate of UNMIT for a further 12 months. It is important for the United Nations to demonstrate its sustained commitment to Timor-Leste, both for practical reasons and for the reassuring message this will send to the people of Timor-Leste. New Zealand contributes personnel to both UNMIT and the ISF, and we will continue to do so.

New Zealand welcomes the progress that has been made by the Government of Timor-Leste, in particular the successful conduct of national elections. We commend the efforts of UNMIT in assisting Timor-Leste towards those achievements. We recognize, however, as others have today, that a number of serious issues remain unresolved, including the future of the security forces, the internally displaced persons situation, Reinado's supporters and the petitioners. Furthermore, Timor-Leste will need the long-term support of the international community to overcome the challenges of poverty, unemployment and fragile institutions.

New Zealand supports maintaining police numbers at current levels because we recognize that, while there has been improvement in the overall situation, it does remain fragile. The presence of the United Nations police is an important deterrent to a return to violence. UNMIT needs the capacity to fulfil its two primary roles: to provide security, and, at the same time, to support the durable reform and rebuilding of the police force through capacity-building and training. Both roles are equally important to future stability in Timor-Leste. Close attention is needed to the skills sets of United Nations police officers and the way in which those officers' skills are utilized. New Zealand hopes that the upcoming visit by the Police Adviser of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will help in identifying ways to strengthen the United Nations police, including reviewing the process for the handover of police posts to the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) to ensure that PNTL is fully ready to assume those responsibilities.

New Zealand continues to believe that security sector reform is essential for ensuring long-term stability in Timor-Leste. UNMIT has a critical supporting role to play. New Zealand strongly encourages UNMIT to step up its efforts to engage with Timor-Leste to find a suitable approach to supporting them in institutionalizing and strengthening Timor-Leste's security forces. A single coherent plan that all stakeholders are committed to would help to ensure a sound and enduring outcome to that process.

There are many other areas in which UNMIT and the international community need to assist Timor-Leste to help the young country stand on its own. Strengthening the justice sector is a high priority. Every effort needs to be made to counter perceptions of impunity. In that regard, it is important that all the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into the events of April and May 2006 are fully implemented.

Addressing the multifaceted challenges of underdevelopment and poverty must also be pursued in parallel with those other efforts. New Zealand will continue to assist through its bilateral and multilateral programmes.

New Zealand stands ready as a regional partner and friend of Timor-Leste. We continue to offer our support and encouragement to the leaders and people of Timor-Leste and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Atul Khare, and the UNMIT team. New Zealand remains committed to working with the international community in assisting Timor-Leste. We thank the Security Council for its ongoing support and for the leadership of South Africa in that respect.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): Japan strongly condemns the recent attacks on President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, which sought to obstruct Timor-Leste's nation-building processes through violence. Resorting to violence is unacceptable. We wish President Ramos-Horta a speedy recovery. I also take this opportunity to thank Special Representative Mr. Atul Khare and his team in the field for their dedication in the difficult conditions.

Since the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) last year, Timor-Leste conducted two elections successfully and the parliament completed its first budgetary process through constructive dialogue among all parties. It was gratifying to observe the country recovering from the setback of the 2006 crisis and moving steadily towards democratic governance.

Therefore, that makes it all the more regrettable to witness the unlawful attacks on the democratically elected leaders of the Government. At the same time, it is highly commendable that the Government responded promptly to the emerging situation in an effective manner, in accordance with the constitution, and that the people remained calm and maintained public order. This is clear evidence that the efforts for nation-building have made solid progress.

The report of the Secretary-General points out that there are areas for improvement in order to realize sustainable stability. And, as last Monday's incidents indicate, the situation in Timor-Leste is still fragile. Timor-Leste requires continued support on the part of the international community, and UNMIT plays the primary and indispensable role in this. Therefore, Japan supports a decision by the Security Council to extend the mandate of UNMIT for another 12 months.

Rebuilding a professional national police force is an essential step towards restoring confidence in the Government. We are pleased that UNMIT has successfully completed the screening process for all registered officers. The Government and UNMIT have begun discussing the possibility of a phased transfer of police responsibility to the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL).

We commend the readiness of the PNTL to assume more responsibility for the security of their own country. The transfer of responsibility, of course, has to be carried out after careful evaluation of the PNTL's level of capability and of the trust of the people and the community. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to send an expert mission to UNMIT to assess the requirements of the PNTL and possible necessary adjustments to the composition of UNMIT.

Japan is committed to supporting every effort for peacebuilding and development in Timor-Leste. Japan attaches great importance to advancing international efforts to support peacebuilding activities in post-conflict countries. This commitment was reaffirmed in the recent statement by Prime Minister Fukuda and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Koumura. They

both emphasized that Japan must play a responsible role in the international community as a peace-fostering nation, and expressed the hope that Japan will become a focal point for the world to gather knowledge and experience in peacebuilding and to train peacebuilding professionals.

It is for this reason that Japan is extending support for peacebuilding efforts around the world and has launched a pilot programme to train peacebuilding experts in Japan and other Asian countries. Japan will continue to make the utmost efforts in fulfilling its responsibility as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The consolidation of peace entails steady economic recovery and development. Peacebuilding challenges should be tackled in a holistic manner. While we support the extension of the UNMIT mandate, it is essential to always keep in mind the importance of the peacebuilding element in Timor-Leste.

In order for Timor-Leste's recovery to be more successful, the donor base will have to be broadened so that the country can benefit from a wide range of international support. In particular, we should put high priority on creating job opportunities for young people and on promoting the economic activities of the private sector.

Japan has stood by the Government and the people of Timor-Leste and will continue to do so and to demonstrate solidarity and support for the country's efforts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate. I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his very comprehensive assessment and his extremely accurate analysis of the situation in Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank Ambassador Nelson Santos for his presentation and to thank Ambassador Kumalo for his keen interest and helpful leadership on matters related to Timor-Leste.

Portugal concurs with the statement which the representative of Slovenia has just made on behalf of the European Union.

Allow me, first of all, to reiterate our condemnation of the attacks against President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão and to express our best wishes for the prompt recovery of the President of Timor-Leste. The recent events illustrate once again, and in a dramatic way, the vulnerability of Timor-Leste. However, despite these regrettable actions, the situation throughout the country, for the time being, remains quiet.

We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, and all the staff of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for their tireless and invaluable dedication to the overall security and stability of the country. Effective action should be taken to capture the perpetrators of the 11 February attacks. At the same time, a thorough investigation of the events is urgently required.

In the current circumstances, we encourage the Government, the political parties and the people of Timor-Leste to redouble their efforts to consolidate democratic governance and the rule of law. Political consensus is essential for resolving a number of key issues. The situation of the estimated 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) is one of those issues. We reiterate that it is essential to ensure the return of the IDPs and their resettlement in their original communities. Furthermore, it is important that the situation of the nearly 600 petitioners of the Timor-Leste defence force be resolved in a peaceful manner.

We also believe that justice is a key element for long-lasting national reconciliation. That is the reason why Portugal strongly supports the ongoing efforts to obtain accountability for the events of 1999 and of April and May 2006, along the lines recommended in the report of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry.

Portugal has a consistent standing bilateral commitment towards Timor-Leste and is a leading donor in a large spectrum of areas, including governance, public administration, justice, education and security sector reform. Additionally, we are strongly committed to UNMIT, contributing with a formed police unit from the Portuguese gendarmerie, and we actively support the mandate of UNMIT in all areas.

Since August 2006, UNMIT, in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste, has sought to foster

stability, promote democratic governance, political dialogue and social cohesion. It is in this context that I think it is worth noting that the presidential and parliamentary elections held in 2007 were steps in the right direction in the process of consolidating democratic institutions in Timor-Leste.

Rebuilding the National Police of Timor-Leste, in particular continuing the screening and mentoring processes, is an important factor that can contribute to the long-awaited normalization to which the people of Timor-Leste aspire. In the meantime, a continued UNMIT police presence is needed to ensure law enforcement until the National Police is fully reconstituted.

Therefore we welcome the Secretary-General's intention to send an expert mission to UNMIT in the near future in order to conduct a thorough assessment of the capabilities of the National Police and to suggest possible adjustments to the UNMIT police component.

The continued presence of the United Nations in Timor-Leste is essential in helping to address the challenges facing that country, in full respect for Timorese choices. Portugal strongly supports the extension of UNMIT's mandate for a further 12-month period, in order that the work for the consolidation of peace, democracy and development in Timor-Leste can be adequately sustained.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): Let me start by addressing to Ambassador Nelson Santos our continued pledge of solidarity and support.

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his comprehensive presentation on the situation in Timor-Leste and Mr. Atul Khare and his staff for their dedication in assisting the Timorese Government.

To Ambassador Kumalo, we extend our appreciation for his leadership in conducting the work of the core group.

Brazil strongly condemned the attacks against President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão on 11 February. President Lula has conveyed his heartfelt wishes for a swift and full recovery to President Ramos-Horta, and today I reiterate those wishes.

The attacks on the heads of State and Government of Timor-Leste represent an assault on the democratic institutions of the country. Brazil rejects all forms of violence as a method to settle political differences and reaffirms that only through democracy and dialogue can true reconciliation be achieved. We are confident that the Timorese Government, with the valuable assistance of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), will succeed in maintaining public order and stability in the country. The exemplary manner in which the institutions and the people of Timor-Leste responded to the events of 11 February are praiseworthy.

The United Nations has been playing a pivotal role in the reconstruction of Timor-Leste by providing assistance in several key sensitive sectors, including security. We believe that the United Nations should continue its work in Timor-Leste as long as its presence is required by the Timorese Government in order to consolidate a democratic State and a self-sustaining society. In that regard, Brazil fully agrees with the recommendation made by the Secretary-General that the mandate of UNMIT be extended for one year.

In spite of the many challenges that Timor-Leste still faces, important progress has been made in many areas, such as strengthening democracy and human rights. As mentioned by Mr. Guéhenno and Ambassador Nelson Santos, recent efforts conducted by President Ramos-Horta to promote reconciliation and ensure an inclusive participatory environment are of crucial importance and should be pursued further. We commend the advances made in rebuilding Timorese institutions, especially the police and the judiciary. UNMIT has been able to perform the mandated task of ensuring law enforcement, while also increasing efforts to support the training and institutional development of the national police. As the events of 11 February may suggest, however, further efforts may be necessary in order to ensure general public security.

Many pressing issues remain. The plight of the 100,000 internally displaced people that have to be integrated into society constitutes a serious humanitarian challenge. It also represents a political and security concern. That issue requires immediate attention and a coordinated effort involving national actions as well as international support.

Brazil is fully committed to Timor-Leste's long-term development and stability. The two countries, Brazil and Timor-Leste, have strong ties that go beyond a common language. With over a dozen bilateral cooperation programmes currently in force, Brazil has been assisting Timor-Leste in such areas as education, justice and security. President Ramos-Horta and members of his cabinet, including Minister Zacarias da Costa, paid an official visit to Brazil on 30 January. On that occasion, both heads of State reiterated the shared goals of intensified cooperation between the two countries. One concrete example is the planned training programme for Timorese prosecutors; another relevant initiative is the establishment of a working group to elaborate a draft military penal process code and military penal code for Timor-Leste. During President Ramos-Horta's visit, Brazil also announced a new phase of the training course for the military police in Timor-Leste. A third interesting project that combines security and social development is highlighted in the Secretary-General's report. The two Governments signed a memorandum of understanding by which vocational training will be provided at Becora Prison. It will help inmates to develop trade skills that may prove important to their reintegration into society. The establishment of a training centre for prison staff is also envisaged.

The Brazilian Government believes that long-term stability in Timor-Leste requires a sound and comprehensive development programme. As underlined by the Secretary-General, there are high expectations in the Timorese population that solutions will be found to numerous challenges facing the country, including poverty, unemployment and other socio-economic problems. Brazil is determined to be part of a vigorous collective effort, bilaterally and through UNMIT, to assist the Timorese in overcoming such challenges.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on Mr. Guéhenno to respond to the questions posed.

Mr. Guéhenno: At this late hour, I just wish first to place on record the gratitude of the United Nations for the strong commitment of the international community to Timor-Leste, which has been so much in evidence during this meeting. We greatly appreciate the support of the Security Council. We greatly appreciate the support of the neighbours and of all those nations that have spoken this morning and that are so critical to the provision of security as well as development aid to Timor-Leste.

I noted during this meeting how many speakers stressed the importance of political dialogue and consensus in Timor-Leste. Indeed, that dialogue was spearheaded by President Ramos-Horta himself during those meetings of 17 January and 7 February that I mentioned in my briefing. Such political dialogue really is the foundation for the solution both of the short-term issues that we have discussed this morning, such as the internally displaced persons, the petitioners and the fugitives, and of the longer-term challenges, such as security sector reform, the strengthening of the judiciary, and also, of course, as many speakers have stressed, the socio-economic challenges facing Timor-Leste. It is therefore very encouraging to see such a strong consensus here on what is needed in Timor-Leste to continue our partnership with that country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5844

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5844th meeting

Monday, 25 February 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Arias	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Johansen
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2008/26)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-25099 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2008/26)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, New Zealand, Portugal and Timor-Leste, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Santos (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/124, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Australia, New Zealand, Portugal and South Africa. Members also have before them document S/2008/26, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1802 (2008).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5845

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5845th meeting

Monday, 25 February 2008, 10.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Arias	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Johansen
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

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08-25105 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Holmes to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Holmes: I am grateful for this opportunity to brief the Council on my visit to Kenya from 8 to 10 February. I apologize if I have kept the Council waiting; I think there was a misunderstanding about the timing.

I went to Kenya in response to the post-electoral wave of violence and its devastating impact on so many ordinary Kenyans, and at the specific request of the Secretary-General. My first objective was to reaffirm the practical support of the United Nations for the people of Kenya at this extremely difficult time. As part of that, I made clear again that the full weight of the United Nations was behind the mediation process led by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. My other aims were to assess the humanitarian situation on the ground, in particular by visiting some of those most affected by the violence; to make clear to all concerned our commitment to completely impartial help for all those in need; and to make sure that the humanitarian community is fully prepared for the challenges in the coming months.

As a result of the violence, which left around 1,000 people dead, at least 300,000 people were driven from their homes — and probably many more. Over 270,000 people from six of Kenya's eight provinces remain in approximately 200 camps and sites in the Rift Valley, Nyanza, Western, Coastal and Central Provinces. An estimated 500,000 people altogether continue to require emergency assistance, with shelter, water, food and medical care. Some 12,000 Kenyan refugees in Uganda are also being looked after.

Most of the basic humanitarian needs in the camps and sites have, I believe, been reasonably met so far. The Kenya Red Cross Society has led the response, together with the relevant government services, and has played a key role in that success. The initial strategy of the United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners, which responded quickly and effectively to the new and unexpected crisis, was to support and complement the national response capacity, in a country that does not lack resources or a strong civil society.

There have been many challenges to overcome. In the first chaotic weeks, displaced Kenyans moved around the country rapidly and unpredictably, driven by violence and threats of violence, but also by fear and rumours. When I was visiting camps in the Nairobi area, one site had had approximately 5,000 people just a few days earlier, but was virtually empty by the time I went to see for myself. Those concerned were moving to their tribal homelands, areas that they considered to be safer. That is a pattern for certain groups among those affected. It greatly complicates identifying and assisting all those in need, including host communities, which will be a considerable challenge for the humanitarian community in the weeks to come.

In practice, we have mapped three main types of displaced persons. The first are farmers or smallholders living in the Rift Valley, who have been driven from their land and remain in camps, churches and police stations. Second are migrant workers from western Kenya, who have been chased out of their homes by reprisal attacks. Many of them have returned, at least temporarily, to their ancestral homelands in the western provinces. Third are those living in the slums of the greater Nairobi area, who were forced out of their homes and shops during the violence and are now in

camps around Nairobi, unsure of where and how to restart their lives.

In the first category, Rift Valley Province has over three quarters of the total displaced in Kenya and was one of the worst affected by the violence. I visited five sites in Nakuru and Molo and was impressed by the cooperative efforts of the communities themselves, the Government, the Kenya Red Cross, United Nations agencies and NGOs to meet people's immediate needs.

However, it was also clear that a good deal more needs to be done to consolidate sites, build new camps, increase security and privacy, particularly for women, children and other vulnerable groups, and upgrade the quality of our assistance. It was evident from my discussions in the camps that the vast majority of these people left in panic, taking nothing with them, and are reluctant to return to their homes in the near future because of the violence they have experienced and their continuing fear. In many cases, their homes and crops had been destroyed. These people did not take the view that they had tribal homelands to return to. Many said that they wanted to be resettled elsewhere, though this poses considerable problems of both principle and practicality.

Common threads among all the displaced groups were their urgent need for safety and security, particularly for women and children, with some disturbing accounts of continuing abuses in and around camps, and the deep psychological consequences of the trauma they had been through. I heard dreadful stories of murder, of rape and of burning. The ethnic basis of much of what happened was tragically clear. Heightened ethnic awareness and fears have quickly spread through much of Kenyan society, fuelling polarization. The effects of ethnic divisions on basic government services, for example, have been dramatic in some areas because staff have quietly left or fear to go to work. Overall, it is clear that this displacement crisis will not disappear quickly even if there is a political agreement in the coming days.

All of this poses a huge challenge for the politicians, for Kenyan society and for the humanitarian community. Questions about the possible return and resettlement of internally displaced persons are particularly sensitive. There are pressures of conflicting kinds on them and on the humanitarian community. It is natural to want to see as many people as possible return home as soon as possible, but there is a lot to be done in terms of rebuilding confidence and providing reliable security before that can happen in many cases. It is vital in these circumstances to adhere strictly to the principles of impartiality, voluntariness and the need for full consultation with the internally displaced persons themselves about their future. We are reinforcing our guidelines on those points and working with the Government and the opposition on the way forward.

I emphasized those points in meetings with the Government and the opposition. Both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of State for Special Programmes acknowledged them and expressed their gratitude for the support of the United Nations and the international humanitarian community. The Secretary-General of the Orange Democratic Movement and his humanitarian team did likewise, while emphasizing that we needed to pay as much attention to those who were not landowners and who were therefore fleeing to their homelands as to those who were likely to stay in the camps for some time.

Meanwhile, the depth and complexity of the underlying causes of the violence should not be understated; nor should the difficulty of tackling those long-standing issues. Time and political will from all sides will be needed if there is to be any hope of real success and a decent chance of averting further violent explosions in future.

Decades-long grievances over land, poverty and wide economic inequalities must be addressed in a context of strong population growth and limited availability of fertile land. Political manipulation of land and tribal issues will have to be prevented in future, including, no doubt, through constitutional and electoral reform to encourage more equitable representation of different interests in Government. There must also be accountability for those responsible for the violence, the widespread abuses of human rights and the multiple failures to protect civilians. I believe that the United Nations can and should play a vital helping role in many of those areas, including programmes to tackle provision of livelihood support, youth unemployment and reconciliation between communities, building on local initiatives.

While in Nairobi, I spoke to the donor community to remind it that the response to the international Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan, which had appealed for $42 million, was so far only

around 60 per cent, including a contribution of $7 million from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. That level of funding response is a concern for most agencies in light of the potential for a protracted crisis. We will be revising the Response Plan in the coming weeks and I hope that donors will respond generously as the strategy behind it develops.

The regional implications of this crisis are considerable because of Kenya's long-standing role as East Africa's main transport hub. More than 80 per cent of Uganda's total imports for 2007 passed through Mombasa, as did almost all of Rwanda's exports. Burundi, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, parts of northern Tanzania and the southern Sudan also rely on the port's facilities to a significant degree. That means that many aid and humanitarian operations in the region also rely on Mombasa and are at risk of being significantly affected by violence and disruptions.

There are secondary effects, too. For example, fuel prices in Uganda, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi have increased by almost 50 per cent in the past six weeks. Aid agencies are having to look into alternative routes — for example, through Dar Es Salaam — as a matter of sensible contingency planning in present circumstances. But a peaceful Kenya remains by far the preferred option. There is a huge amount, therefore, at stake.

In summary, my assessment is that major humanitarian needs will have to be addressed for many months to come. We are currently looking at least a year ahead, even on the basis of a quick and effective political settlement of the immediate issues. We will strengthen our own presence further and reinforce our work alongside the Kenyan Red Cross on the basis of a strategic analysis of the needs, a clear action plan and contingency planning in case things deteriorate. As I have suggested, the United Nations will also need to look hard at how to reorient its development programmes for Kenya to reflect the need to deal with the deep underlying problems which have come to the surface.

On the other hand, if there is no quick resolution to the political crisis, the risk of a fresh surge in violence, more displacement and further polarization of society is very high. The humanitarian consequences of that could dwarf anything we have seen so far, so the responsibility of the politicians on all sides is very great, as is the need for continuing strong support from the international community, including this Council, for solutions to both the short-term political problems and the long-term questions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Holmes for his briefing and for the detailed information he has provided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of this subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5846

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5846th meeting

Tuesday, 26 February 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

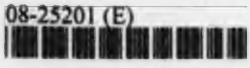
President:	Mr. Arias	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Li Kexin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-25201 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Robert H. Serry, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Serry to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Holmes to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Robert H. Serry, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. I now give the floor to Mr. Serry.

Mr. Serry: It is an honour to brief the Security Council for the first time. I look forward to doing so regularly in the course of my tenure as Special Coordinator, in the service of the Secretary-General and the United Nations.

After two months in Jerusalem, I am deeply conscious of what is at stake today in the Middle East peace process. I am also impressed by the calibre and scale of the work of the United Nations on the ground in difficult, and even dangerous, circumstances. I am convinced of the importance of the United Nations playing its full political, development, humanitarian and human rights role.

I wish to thank President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert and their Governments, as well as the Governments of Egypt and Jordan and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for the warm welcome they have given me. I look forward to paying further introductory visits in the region. I also wish to express my appreciation to my Quartet partners and Quartet Representative Tony Blair for the support and cooperation they have extended to me.

Today, I will brief the Council on developments since the last report, on 30 January (see S/PV.5827), and offer an initial assessment of the situation. I turn first to the bilateral negotiations.

Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Palestinian lead negotiator Ahmad Qurei are meeting on a continuous basis. President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert continue their fortnightly meetings. We welcome the determination of the parties to continue those negotiations despite challenges on the ground, and in an atmosphere of confidentiality. The talks need to make tangible progress on all core issues without exception.

I was also pleased to meet United States Lieutenant General William Fraser when he visited the region for the first time to lead United States efforts to monitor the implementation of phase I Road Map commitments, as agreed at Annapolis. I have offered full United Nations support to the United States-led monitoring process and look forward to regular Quartet consultation on it.

Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Fayyad and his Government continue to promote good governance and revive the economy. Steps this month included addressing electricity subsidies, the finalization of measures to ensure financial transparency and efforts to ensure that Palestinian Authority ministries and agencies develop coordinated and standardized project proposals. We remind donors of the urgency of their quickly disbursing the generous pledges made last December in Paris. Quartet Representative Tony Blair continues his work on economic development projects and other confidence-building measures.

Efforts to improve the security performance of the Palestinian Authority continue. Palestinian security forces carried out operations against militants in several West Bank cities. A Palestinian military court sentenced two individuals to 15 years in prison for killing two Israelis near Hebron in December. Israel stopped pursuing 32 Fatah militants after they surrendered to Palestinian Authority security forces and successfully completed a three-month trial period. The death of a Hamas detainee from what an official autopsy found was a heart attack has led to allegations of mistreatment of detainees by Palestinian Authority security forces. President Abbas has called for an investigation. Approximately 1,000 Palestinian Authority security officers are being trained in Jordan, with support from the United States security coordinator, with a view to their redeployment in April and May. The European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) continues to support the Palestinian civilian police and criminal justice system in the West Bank.

However, the security situation for both Israelis and Palestinians remains a matter of deep concern. One Israeli has been killed and 27 injured by Palestinian militants. Forty-five Palestinians have been killed and 139 injured during Israeli incursions into Gaza and the West Bank. I am particularly alarmed at the number of incidents on both sides where children are being killed or injured.

On 4 February, a suicide attack in Dimona by two bombers from Hebron, for which Hamas claimed responsibility, killed one Israeli and injured six others. Over 320 rockets and mortars have been fired from Gaza, with the town of Sderot again coming under particular attack. We unreservedly condemn indiscriminate rocket and mortar firing towards civilian population centres and crossing points, and suicide attacks against civilians, and call for their immediate cessation. Israeli interlocutors regard the continuation of such attacks as the biggest obstacle to progress in the peace process.

Corporal Gilad Shalit of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is in his twentieth month of captivity in Gaza, and Hamas continues to deny the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access to him. We call for access to be provided and for his release.

Over 10,000 Palestinian prisoners remain in Israeli prisons. President Abbas has appealed for further Palestinian prisoner releases, building on the steps already taken in that regard.

Israeli military operations into Gaza and the West Bank have continued throughout the reporting period. There have been several instances in which civilians have been killed or injured — including last Saturday, when three civilians were killed by a ground-to-ground missile fired into Beit Hanoun. Even if not intended, such casualties are deplorable and should be the subject of transparent investigation and accountability measures. While we are cognizant of Israel's security concerns, Israel is obliged not to take disproportionate measures or to endanger civilians. The United Nations principled opposition to extrajudicial killings is compounded by the frequency with which such operations are carried out in densely populated civilian areas.

Citing security concerns, the IDF is also continuing operations in the West Bank. Those actions undermine the Palestinian Authority's own security efforts. Improved IDF cooperation with the Palestinian Authority security forces in the West Bank is crucial.

In that context, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has reported that there are 580 obstacles to Palestinian movement in the West Bank, a level that has stayed steady for many months, and has even increased, despite Palestinian Authority security efforts and Israeli pledges to remove obstacles. Closure levels must be reduced significantly if the Palestinian economy is to revive and if donor assistance is to produce long-term results.

Phase I of the Road Map, to which the parties recommitted at Annapolis, requires the Government of Israel to freeze all settlement activity, including "natural growth", and to remove all outposts erected since March 2001. However, construction continues in settlements throughout the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem. Tenders for new housing continue to be issued by the Israeli Government, and no outposts have been removed. Continued settlement activity is illegal anywhere in the occupied Palestinian territory and is an obstacle to peace. I should also inform the Council that settlement expansion was cited by several Palestinian and Arab interlocutors as among the biggest factors undermining confidence in the Annapolis process and prospects for a viable Palestinian State.

In the same vein, and despite the Road Map obligation to re-open Palestinian institutions in East

Jerusalem, an order was recently issued by the Israeli Government continuing their closure for a further six months. Israel should demonstrate with concrete and urgent steps its commitment to phase I of the Road Map, as called for by Quartet principals when they last met in Paris.

Construction work on the barrier continues within occupied Palestinian territory, in deviation from the Green Line and contrary to the International Court of Justice advisory opinion.

I now turn to the situation in Gaza, which is unacceptable and also unsustainable in humanitarian, human rights, security and political terms. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs will brief the Council on the severe humanitarian situation in more detail. Several factors have created a dangerous cocktail for Israel, Egypt and the Palestinians, causing deep suffering and damaging prospects for a two-State solution.

The Hamas takeover last June violently removed the Palestinian Authority from Gaza, including from the crossings. A degree of order has been established, but the rule of law is absent. Major changes are taking place outside a legal framework. Many independent institutions have been closed, or replaced and restaffed so that they are controlled by Hamas but disconnected from their headquarters in Ramallah. The civilian justice system has ceased to function, as have important instruments of good governance and social regulation in Gaza. Allegations of human rights abuses in Gaza continue to be made by various Palestinian and international non-governmental organizations operating in the Strip.

Despite statements of intent, Hamas has not acted with sufficient determination to bring about an end to rocket attacks by militant groups. Hamas itself also carries out periodic rocket firing and regular mortar fire, to say nothing of the recent suicide bombing. Reports of smuggling continue to be of concern, as are reports of outside militant groups now gaining a foothold in Gaza. We continue to call on Hamas to live up to the responsibilities it has taken on itself and to choose the olive branch over the gun.

However, Israeli measures amounting to collective punishment are also not acceptable. We call on Israel to meet its obligations towards the civilian population of Gaza under international law.

The breach at Rafah at the end of January caused understandable relief in Gaza, as civilians sought basic commodities and a respite from the pressure cooker conditions under which they are forced to live. Egypt moved to re-establish order along the border earlier this month. But the situation remains extremely fragile. Unless addressed, it will remain a danger to the safety, security and well-being of the Palestinian population, to the security of Egypt and of Israel, and to the sustainability of the political process itself. Only yesterday, several thousand people protested against the conditions they face, and the Israel Defense Forces increased its military presence in areas surrounding the Strip.

In the light of these developments, the United Nations has actively made the case with all parties and our Quartet partners that a different and more positive strategy for Gaza is required.

To this end, Quartet envoys are agreed that we should now work towards resumption of normal economic life for the people of Gaza, pursue arrangements that ensure the security of Israel, Egypt and the Palestinians, and support the legitimate Palestinian Authority. Rocket fire and suicide attacks should cease, as should all acts of violence, so that an atmosphere of calm is created. The humanitarian needs of the civilian population must be met, including the uninterrupted provision of essential goods and services, including fuel and power supplies. Stalled United Nations and other projects in Gaza should resume, and the movement of United Nations and humanitarian personnel needs to be facilitated. Conditions need to be established to allow the reopening of crossings, as envisaged in the Agreement on Movement and Access.

It is therefore of crucial importance now that Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority develop a positive strategy for Gaza designed to achieve those goals. Quartet members, individually and collectively, are ready to provide support for such efforts, including the European Union Border Assistance Mission at Rafah, as appropriate. Egypt's efforts along the border and diplomatically to find durable solutions to this crisis are to be commended. The Quartet has also stated publicly its strong support for the proposal of the Palestinian Authority to resume operations at the crossings.

Turning to the regional aspect, the Governments of Egypt and Jordan and the Secretary-General of the

League of Arab States have underlined the importance of the continued commitment of Arab countries to the Arab Peace Initiative. However, they have stressed their growing concern regarding the direction of the peace process, as well as developments in Gaza, and regarding the implications for the region should the peace process not succeed.

During the reporting period, the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan has remained largely quiet, other than an incident on 11 February in which two Syrian youths, residents in the Golan, were shot by an Israeli soldier and subsequently treated in hospital.

I should add that I am not briefing on Lebanon this month in view of the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

Allow me to conclude with some brief personal impressions. From what I have seen in several field visits, including to the West Bank, Gaza and southern Israel, ordinary people, understandably, have little confidence that the political process is delivering.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the imposing presence of the barrier, the expanding settlements, the unremoved outposts, the system of closures and constant military incursions have grave implications for the human rights, economic life and social fabric of the entire population. In Gaza, the deprivations of basic human dignity are even more acute, and the sense of abandonment and frustration is palpable.

In southern Israel, communities that believed Israel's disengagement from Gaza would bring security face daily rocket attacks, while Israelis generally continue to believe that they must primarily rely on Israeli security measures for their safety. In the region, there is a growing sense of disquiet about the state of the political process.

I applaud the sense of responsibility and indeed political courage that Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas have shown in re-embarking on the political process despite public scepticism and many anxieties. The Annapolis process needs to proceed, and it needs support. The international community should do everything it can to ensure that the parties move ahead in the bilateral negotiations towards an agreement on all core issues without exception.

But the Annapolis process can be sustained only by real changes on the ground. First, a major intensification of efforts in the West Bank is required, including more substantial and urgent Israeli actions and continued and intensified efforts by the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with phase I of the Road Map. Secondly, we believe a different and more positive strategy for Gaza is a humanitarian, security and strategic imperative, for Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority, and we welcome the united engagement of the Quartet on this issue.

We will continue to remind all parties of the framework of international law and to work closely with Quartet partners, countries of the region and the Council towards implementation of the Road Map. The goal must be an end to the occupation that began in 1967, the coexistence in peace and security of the State of Israel and the State of Palestine and a comprehensive regional peace, in fulfilment of resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the Arab Peace Initiative.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Serry for that important information. We wish him every success in his new functions. I now give the floor to Mr. John Holmes.

Mr. Holmes: Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Council on my visit to the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel from 14 to 18 February. I spent a day in Gaza, a day in the West Bank and a morning in Sderot in southern Israel. I also called on Israeli Government officials, the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority and others and held intensive discussions with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations working in both the West Bank and Gaza and with representatives of civil society.

I found conditions for the people of Gaza grim and miserable, and far from normal. Eight months of severe restrictions on the movement of goods and people entering and leaving the territory, following the Hamas takeover in June 2007, have taken a heavy economic and social toll, coming on top of years of difficulty and economic decline. Whilst the most basic humanitarian goods, particularly food aid, have mostly continued to struggle through, other imports have been progressively closed off, including critical spare parts and raw materials such as cement. Only about 10 per cent of what went into Gaza in January 2007 was allowed to enter in January 2008. In addition, in

October, Israel started to reduce the flow of industrial diesel used to operate the single power station in Gaza. In February, the amount of electricity supplied to Gaza from Israel was also reduced. Since June 2007, the movement of Palestinians in and out of Gaza has been virtually impossible, apart from the short period when the Rafah wall was down, and with limited exceptions made for urgent medical cases, pilgrims, those with student and work visas and foreign residence documentation.

The consequences are increasingly severe and visible. Almost 80 per cent of the population are now receiving food aid; most industry and agriculture has collapsed, raising unemployment and poverty to new heights; frequent and lengthy power cuts severely impair the functioning of essential services and infrastructure; water quality is declining rapidly, where water is available at all; the inadequacies of the sewage system are increasingly exposed, with a real risk of a sewage lagoon at Beit Lahiya collapsing; the medical and education systems are teetering on the edge of failure, as lack of equipment, spare parts and qualified staff, and psychological strains, undermine their functioning.

Vulnerability of the weakest to disease is rising, notably among children, who make up more than half of the population of Gaza. For instance, in October 2007 the number of children under the age of 3 diagnosed with diarrhoea increased by 20 per cent compared to the previous year, and anaemia among children is up by 40 per cent. This bleak situation is further compounded by bureaucratic difficulties between the Palestinian Authority and those administering health care, for example, in Gaza.

The Israeli Government has said that, while there are security concerns about the crossing points themselves, which have been fired on and through which attempts have been made to smuggle arms and potential bombers, the main motivation for the restrictions is the continuing firing of Qassam rockets from Gaza. My visit to Sderot, which has been the target of more than 4,300 rockets since 2004, brought out the physical and psychological damage to the population there from this constant barrage. These crude rockets are aimed at hurting civilians and clearly constitute terrorism. Their continued firing is completely unacceptable and must be halted unconditionally. Hamas, which claims to govern the Gaza Strip, must accept its full share of responsibility for the suffering in Gaza. Above all, it must act to stop these rockets immediately.

However, I also made clear publicly and privately my view that, whatever the provocation and illegality of the rockets, the effective Israeli isolation of Gaza is not justified, given Israel's continuing obligations to the people of Gaza. It amounts to collective punishment and is contrary to international humanitarian law. Moreover, it does not appear to be having the desired effect, either in halting the rockets or in weakening Hamas's position among the people of Gaza, or more widely. Only those who want to see further radicalization can be happy with the present situation.

Meanwhile, the consequences for civilians on both sides are dramatic, not only through the imposed restrictions and the continuous firing of rockets, but also through the resulting repeated incursions into and military clashes inside Gaza, which cause many civilian casualties, however unintended they might be. The fundamental principles of distinction between combatants and non-combatants and of proportionality in attacks during the conduct of hostilities must be respected by all sides.

The current situation in Gaza is not sustainable and is extremely damaging to the prospects for the current peace process. Only political efforts can change this dynamic. Meanwhile, from a humanitarian point of view, while a return to the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access is what is really needed, I pressed the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority at least to ensure that more humanitarian and other goods are allowed in, on a more predictable and systematic basis. I made the same message clear to Hamas in what I said publicly.

This means reopening the crossings and establishing better mechanisms for identifying and addressing the fundamental needs of the population. In particular, I asked that the materials necessary for the restart of $213 million worth of frozen humanitarian United Nations projects, in areas such as sanitation, housing, education and health, be allowed in by Israel and that spares and equipment for medical and sanitation services be given priority. There were some indications that the Israeli authorities are willing to respond positively to these requests.

I would add that the proposals of the Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, for the reopening of the key Karni crossing — the only one with adequate infrastructure to process large quantities of goods appropriately and effectively — deserve all our support. A properly negotiated role is also necessary

for the Rafah crossing, a role which does not give credence to the idea that Israel can hand over its responsibilities and obligations for Gaza to Egypt or any other State or authority. Arrangements which ensure proper screening for goods passing in both directions through the crossings, to meet Israel's security concerns, should be possible, if necessary with appropriate international support.

The conditions of life I saw in the West Bank were obviously better than those in Gaza, but the situation there is of no less fundamental humanitarian concern. I had read about the barrier, the settlements, the permit regime and the access closures, but that had not prepared me for the visible and tangible reality on the ground.

The combination of the construction of the barrier, the steady expansion of the settlements, all still illegal, and the now 580 separate checkpoints and blockages within the West Bank is fragmenting communities. It seriously impairs the access of tens of thousands of people to their lands and to essential services, not least medical services. Severe restrictions on the movement of goods and people are affecting economic growth, as well as increasing poverty and food insecurity and reducing health standards. They further threaten the viability of a future Palestinian State.

In my meetings with Palestinians in the West Bank, I felt that the despair and sense of humiliation and injustice were no less than in Gaza. This was particularly evident from my visit to Hebron, where the presence of a relatively small group of 600 settlers and the considerable security arrangements put in place to ensure their protection have divided the city and severely affect the economy and the lives of its citizens. Representatives of Palestinian civil society throughout the West Bank appealed passionately to the United Nations, through me, to do something about their plight and their lack of a viable future, as they saw it.

Israel has legitimate security concerns and a right and duty to defend its citizens. But even in such circumstances, security cannot override all other concerns or justify so much damage to ordinary people's livelihoods and infringements of their human dignity and human rights. Israel has obligations towards the Palestinian population under occupation. I therefore pressed the Israeli authorities to begin implementing their commitments to ease at least some of the restrictions.

Looking at these deteriorating realities on the ground in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as in Sderot, the disconnect between these realities and the hopes and aims of the continuing peace talks seemed almost total and, indeed, risks making a mockery of the readiness of the international community to invest $7.7 billion in the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory. As the Special Coordinator has stressed, unless this chasm is bridged quickly and the humanitarian indicators begin to rise and create some sense of hope for the future, the chances of success in the peace talks may be fatally undermined, no matter how great the sincerity and ingenuity of all concerned. And we desperately need those talks to succeed this year. The alternative comforts only the extremists.

Notwithstanding all the difficulties, the humanitarian community will continue to do all it can to respond to the moral imperative of saving and improving lives and preserving human dignity. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the other agencies and NGOs working in Gaza, in particular, are doing a heroic job under circumstances that are difficult and dangerous, not least due to the imposed restrictions on the movement and access of United Nations staff, which are too often not consistent with the immunities and privileges to which they are entitled.

Meanwhile, I also appeal to the donor community to continue to respond generously to what has now become the third largest annual consolidated appeal for humanitarian funds, after Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, I appeal to the Security Council to continue to speak up about the consequences for civilians, in both the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel, of what is happening and about the overriding duty on all sides to comply with international humanitarian law and the resolutions of this Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Holmes for his important briefing and the critical information he provided on the situation in Gaza.

In accordance with understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5847

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5847th meeting

Saturday, 1 March 2008, 8.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Ballestero
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Letter dated 1 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/142)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

08-25715 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 8.30 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Russian*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March 2008, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Alberto Arias, Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of February 2008. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Arias for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Letter dated 1 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/142)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Israel in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Carmon (Israel) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 1 March 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2008/143 and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council which will be held on Saturday, 1 March 2008, regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mansour (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in response to the letter dated 1 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya contained in document S/2008/142.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to photocopies of a document to be issued under the symbol S/2008/144, which contains identical letters dated 1 March 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting. I now give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: Before I begin, I would like to express my felicitations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Arias of Panama for his able conduct of the work of the Council during the month of February.

Since last Wednesday, there has been a deeply alarming escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel, and a terrible civilian death toll. The scenes from Gaza today have been particularly disturbing. Some 117 rockets have been fired from Gaza at southern Israel, including 26 rockets today. Those rockets have been fired at several civilian centres and have extended as far north as the Israeli city of Ashkelon. According to press reports and Israeli Government sources, the rockets fired at Ashkelon are

not home-made Qassams, but rather rockets of advanced Katyusha-like design, allegedly smuggled into Gaza when the border with Egypt was breached. One Israeli civilian has been killed in Sderot and five civilians were reported injured in Ashkelon today, including women and children.

During this same period, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have undertaken attacks from the air and by land on targets in the Gaza Strip. An estimated 90 Palestinians have been killed, among them many civilians, and injuries are in the hundreds. According to United Nations estimates, 59 Palestinians were killed today, including 39 civilians, among them three women and five minors, including an infant. Let me stress that there are many conflicting reports on the numbers of casualties, and those figures are not confirmed. Additionally, there has been heavy property damage.

Israeli land incursions are taking place near Jabaliya and the northern Gaza Strip. Two Israeli soldiers are reported to have been killed in the fighting. The IDF reports that it destroyed a truck carrying 160 rockets. United Nations sources report at least four incidents of Israeli fire against ambulances and medical personnel. The Palestinian Ministry of Health has issued a call for diesel in order to operate its ambulances. All schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) have been closed, and many families are trapped inside their houses by the violence, unable to obtain medical aid or reach safety. I call on Israel to facilitate full access to hospitals and medical centres for the injured.

At the outset of this escalation, I publicly made clear my deep concern, and I have been diplomatically engaged to press for a calming of the violence. I have spoken today to Palestinian President Abbas, Israeli Foreign Minister Livni and League of Arab States Secretary-General Amr Moussa. United Nations agencies on the ground, especially UNRWA, are continuing their efforts to assist people in grave distress.

In the light of those deeply disturbing developments, I would like to make the following clear.

I condemn Palestinian rocket attacks and call for the immediate cessation of such acts of terrorism, which serve no purpose, endanger Israeli civilians and bring misery to the Palestinian people. I call for an end to these attacks.

While recognizing Israel's right to defend itself, I condemn the disproportionate and excessive use of force that has killed and injured so many civilians, including children. I call on Israel to cease such attacks. Israel must fully comply with international humanitarian law and exercise the utmost restraint. Incidents in which civilians have been killed or injured must be investigated and accountability must be ensured.

I am deeply concerned at the possibility of the violence escalating, and have offered our strong support for all efforts to bring about an end to the violence and a period of calm. I call on all parties to step back from the brink of even deeper and more deadly clashes.

I am also extremely concerned at the impact of these developments on the negotiation process. I call on all members of the international community, important stakeholders and Security Council members to exercise their influence on the parties to stop the violence and to allow humanitarian relief. All parties should rededicate their commitment to the peace process.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): Mr. President, thank you for your efforts to convene this urgent meeting of the Security Council to address the current crisis. In congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March, we assure you of our full confidence in your ability to guide the important work of the Council. We also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Panama for his outstanding leadership of the Council last month. I would also like to thank the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for its request to convene this evening's meeting, in the light of the escalation of violence and the dramatic deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory in recent days.

Before proceeding, I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and for the attention given by him and by all Council members and other

concerned Member States to the critical situation that we are facing.

We come to the Security Council once again to appeal to the Council — to plead with the Council — to uphold international law, to uphold its own resolutions and to uphold its Charter responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. The silence of the international community, due to the ongoing paralysis of the Security Council, is wholly unjustifiable and unacceptable. The lack of action and lack of accountability have only led, time after time, to the perpetration of even more war crimes with impunity against innocent civilians, as evidenced by the tragic and violent events of today and the past week.

The Palestinian death toll in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the besieged Gaza Strip, is rising rapidly as a result of the brutal military assaults being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, against the civilian population under its occupation. The situation on the ground is deteriorating dramatically as the violence escalates, the number of dead and injured mounts and fear and panic spread throughout the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, which has already endured so much suffering and is barely surviving under conditions of severe duress resulting from Israel's ongoing and unlawful closure of all of the territory's border crossings, its obstruction of vital humanitarian supplies, including food, medicines and other necessary and basic goods and materials, its reduction of fuel and electricity supplies and its incessant lethal military campaign.

In deliberate and flagrant breach of article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilians in Time of War, Israel continues to collectively punish the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip by means of the sealing and closure of the territory and the obstruction of the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian access, as well as by means of military reprisals against persons and property and by acts of terror and intimidation. Such actions are clearly prohibited by international law and are being committed by the occupying Power on a scale and scope amounting to war crimes. The humanitarian calamity in the Gaza Strip continues to deepen as a result, and the carnage and destruction are perpetuating a vicious and bloody cycle of violence that threatens to completely destabilize the situation and derail the fragile peace process.

Despite our repeated warnings and appeals to the Council, no action has been taken to stem this cycle of violence, and Israel continues its deadly rampage throughout the Gaza Strip. In just one month's time — from the start of February until today — Israel, the occupying Power, has killed more than 126 Palestinians, including 19 innocent children and several women and many members of the same families. The children killed have included infant babies, aged two days old and five months old; three young boys, brothers from the same family, ages 8, 11 and 14; and several other innocent children who were at play or in their homes when death cruelly struck them — as well as an entire family, including a mother, father and their three young children, who were killed in their home in Al-Bureij refugee camp in a missile strike two weeks ago. Palestinian families are being devastated and their homes, communities and lives destroyed before everyone's eyes. There is no justification whatsoever for the killing of innocent civilians. There is no justification whatsoever for killing babies, for killing children, for killing women, for killing older people — for killing innocent civilians.

When the slaughter of innocent children has become acceptable or is somehow justified under the pretext of promoting security or "counter-terror", we know that we have completely sunken into the dark abyss where there is a total absence of the law, absence of logic or reason, absence of morality, absence of conscience and absence of humanity. When we reach this point, we bitterly begin to realize that the standards of the law and human rights are not equally applicable to all humans, not even to children and women or to the elderly or disabled. This perception looms dangerously among the Palestinian people, who have endured the killing of more than 1,000 children by the occupying forces since the year 2000. Living in a world surrounded by death, destruction, misery and hardship, Palestinian children, especially in the Gaza Strip, are traumatized and plagued by the ever-present fear and question, "Will I be next?", as the missiles and shells continue to rain down on their homes and neighbourhoods.

Today alone, at least 60 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli military attacks in the northern Gaza Strip, including at least five children and three

women. In addition, it is being reported that more than 150 Palestinians have been wounded by the Israeli occupying forces in this latest round of attacks. The hospitals in Gaza, which are already facing critical shortages of medical supplies and decaying equipment as a result of the ongoing Israeli siege of Gaza, are exerting all efforts possible under such circumstances to treat those who have been wounded in these attacks. Additionally, the Israeli occupying forces continue to target medical rescue teams and forbid ambulances from evacuating the wounded. Meanwhile, the rest of the population in the area, gripped by panic and fear and already suffering humanitarian hardship, are reported to be hiding in their homes, where even there they know they are not safe from the military strikes of the occupying Power.

At the same time, it must be pointed out that many of the Palestinians killed and wounded have been the casualties of extrajudicial executions illegally committed by the Israeli occupying forces via missile air strikes by warplanes and helicopters, launched at targets in heavily populated civilian areas. Such extrajudicial executions also continue to be carried out by the occupying Power in the West Bank, in addition to constant raids and arrest campaigns and other illegal practices and actions. Just this week in the Balata refugee camp in Nablus, in the West Bank, Israeli undercover units killed three Palestinian men. Such actions are clearly intended to undermine the efforts by Palestinian security forces to establish calm and security and promote law and order in the area, and they threaten the truce agreement reached there.

Even a cursory review of the timeline of events will reveal clearly that these killings of Palestinian civilians by Israel, the occupying Power, did not begin with the killing of an Israeli in Sderot by rocket fire from the Gaza Strip — which the Palestinian Authority has repeatedly rejected and of which it has called for the immediate cessation. And, on this point, we must once again recall that, in any and all circumstances, reprisals against the civilian population are strictly prohibited under international law. Rather, what has been occurring in the occupied Palestinian territory has been a constant and ongoing lethal and indiscriminate Israeli military campaign being waged against the defenceless Palestinian civilian population.

What we are witnessing now is the horrific materialization of the repeated threats made over time, which have intensified in recent weeks and days — and made in the past few days by several Israeli officials, who have threatened to launch large-scale military attacks against the Palestinian people under their occupation in the Gaza Strip. In this regard, we highlight the recent threat by the Deputy Defence Minister of Israel to inflict a "holocaust" among the Palestinian people in Gaza. Such threats, combined with the actual killing of civilians and destruction being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, must be viewed with the utmost seriousness; they must be vehemently condemned, and they require immediate action by the international community, including the Security Council.

Civilians under foreign occupation are entitled to protection of their person and of their dignity under international humanitarian law. There can be no doubt that the acts of aggression committed by Israel in recent days are flagrant violations of these relevant provisions of international humanitarian law. Moreover, such wilful killing of civilians and wanton destruction of property constitute grave breaches — that is, war crimes. Real and immediate measures must be taken to avert the killing of even more innocent souls and avert the uncontrollable spiral of the situation to irreversible depths, wherein the vicious, depraved and deadly cycle of violence will consume everything in its path as well as extinguish all hopes.

Clearly, these unlawful actions are not actions that in any way whatsoever can promote calm and stability and serve the peace process. They are inflammatory, provocative and dangerous and serve only to fully ignite the cycle of violence, death and destruction and to undermine any progress made in the peace process. That is an indisputable fact. The peace process is not divorced from the situation on the ground. Just as positive developments and progress in the peace process can beneficially impact the situation on the ground, such negative developments and illegal actions very detrimentally impact not only the situation on the ground but the peace process itself and the stability of the entire region. The continuation of this sick pattern and vicious cycle will only bring more suffering and loss for both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples and will take us farther away from the realization of peace. This must be a matter of concern for the Council.

We are at a juncture where the international community is in clear concurrence about what is needed to advance the process towards the attainment

of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. Moreover, we are at a juncture where two high-level United Nations officials, including the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Robert Serry, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes, have just this past week briefed the Security Council (see S/PV.5846) on the critical and absolutely untenable situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, with its grave consequences for the security, well-being and human dignity of Palestinian civilians, and have clearly stressed the urgency of bridging the huge gap between the situation on the ground and the peace process between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, including via a new strategy vis-à-vis the Gaza Strip by the concerned parties, in order to avert the fatal undermining of that process and the sabotaging of all hopes for peace. This requires immediate and real action by the international community.

The Security Council cannot continue to be sidelined as this crisis continues to escalate. It must uphold international law and its Charter responsibilities and act to bring an end to this cycle of violence and counter-violence. It must demand respect for the sanctity of civilian life and demand utmost respect for the provisions of international humanitarian law that are supposed to provide innocent civilians with protection in situations of foreign occupation. It must condemn the killing of civilians and condemn the violence that is causing only more suffering and loss for both peoples and taking us further away from the vision of peace we have been striving so desperately to realize — to no avail, as all efforts have been constantly undermined by such illegal actions.

We therefore reiterate our call on the Security Council and on the international community as whole to shoulder their legal and moral obligations and provide the defenceless Palestinian civilians with urgently needed and effective protection. Additionally, an immediate ceasefire in the occupied Palestinian territory and tangible action are required to bring an end to the violence, the killing of civilians, the destruction and the obstruction of provision of humanitarian assistance.

The Security Council must be a player to help the parties break this deadly cycle of violence and help them to advance the new strategy that has been called for to bring an immediate halt to the violence and resolve the current crisis, ameliorate the terrible situation on the ground and create calm and an environment conducive to the advancement of serious peace negotiations in good faith. Continued silence will only bring more death and destruction and the further dangerous destabilization of the situation to the detriment of all concerned, which must be avoided at all costs.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Carmon (Israel): Two days ago — and as a matter of fact, a few minutes ago in his statement — Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned Hamas's rocket fire against Israel and called on Hamas and other terrorist and militant groups to cease all acts of violence and terrorism. He also called on Israel to exercise maximum restraint.

Israel has exercised that restraint for many months now — this in spite of the constant firing of rockets and mortar shells on our towns and villages in southern Israel every single hour and every single day and in spite of Hamas's attempt to carry out terrorist attacks wherever it can target and kill an Israeli.

While Israel has been showing restraint, Hamas has shown no intention of ceasing its vicious attacks. On the contrary, in the past week since Hamas failed to organize a provocative demonstration in Gaza — a failure that might be seen as weakness — it has dramatically escalated its rocket attacks and upgraded its capability in its attacks against our people: Grad missiles, Katyusha rockets, mortar shells and Qassams. Since Wednesday, more than 150 rockets have been fired at Israel, dozens in the past 24 hours alone.

As I speak now, more than a quarter of a million Israeli citizens are in the range of the deadly and murderous weapons of Hamas — care of Hamas, its backers in the region and their malicious vision. The Government of Israel should thus not apologize for protecting its citizens.

We have addressed this situation for a very long time. The members of the Council can see the many letters we have sent this week alone expressing our alarm and concern about Hamas attacks and reiterating our determination to protect our people. That is our right. That is the right of all States, to act in self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of

the United Nations. That is our duty. That is our obligation to our people. I ask the members of the Security Council: Would it not be yours, too?

No responsible Member State would sit back in silence and do nothing as its citizens and territory were under constant attack. They would not be idle as the alarms in Sderot — and now Ashkelon — blared "colour red!, colour red!", giving Israeli civilians less than 15 seconds — 15 seconds of terror. That is all it takes before the rocket slams into their lives, their homes, hospitals, kindergartens, schools, and playgrounds — and their lives are destroyed forever.

There is only one way to describe the activity of Hamas against Israel: it is plain and blunt terrorism. Hamas is a terrorist group backed by Member States of this world body. It is an organization that denies the very basic principles set by the international community itself: cessation of hostilities, cessation of terrorist acts, recognition of Israel and abiding by previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

Hamas not only seeks to kill Israelis; it has no concern for its own civilians. It fires rockets from populated civilian areas, using their civilians as human shields. That is a war crime — there is no other way to describe it — against both Israelis and Palestinians. We heard the term war crimes here today in the Chamber. May I suggest to the Palestinian Observer that he divert that term — or accusation — to the Hamas terrorist group, which brutally took over the Gaza Strip a few months ago, in what the Palestinian Authority leadership itself called a coup. If they answer your phone, my distinguished colleague, you can tell them something about war crimes, as well as much of what you told the Council this evening. The address is there: Hamas. The Palestinians in Gaza are victims of Hamas's regime of terror. It is not only Israelis. We are all being held hostage by Hamas, the real and only occupier of Gaza, through its terror. This situation is unacceptable. We do not accept it. We will continue our fight against terrorism.

There should be no doubt in our minds that Hamas's true vision is the extermination of the State of Israel, and not to live peacefully side by side with us. It does not even seek to restore normalcy for the sake of the people of Gaza. It is thus unfortunate that the Palestinian Observer tonight, as has been the case in the past, does not recognize that Hamas bears sole responsibility for the violence. Once again, the word Hamas was not mentioned even once in his address. I think that says it all.

Hamas's vision for the failure of the moderates is a vision shared by some States in our region — including Iran and Syria — who are sitting behind the scenes, orchestrating and supporting Hamas's terrorism against Israel. They have done this in the past with other terrorist groups elsewhere in the region and around the world. One must wonder about the timing of Hamas's escalation of violence and whether its purpose was not to distract the international community's attention today and this week.

I reiterate Israel's determination to protect its civilians, territory, cities, towns and villages. It is what they expect from us, and it is what we must do for them. Sitting on the sidelines will only embolden the extremists and convince them that they should not stop the violence. Trying to derail the peace process is what the extremists would like us to do. Israel expects the international community and the members of the Security Council to support us in our protection of our people.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 9.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5848

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5848th meeting

Monday, 3 March 2008, 12.45 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Non-proliferation

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

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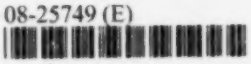

The meeting was called to order at 12.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Germany and the Islamic Republic of Iran in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Matussek (Germany) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the course of its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/141, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2008/116, which contains the text of identical letters dated 22 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): The international community is once again witnessing the credibility of the Security Council, whose primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, being readily downgraded to a mere tool of the national foreign policy of just a few countries. The Council once more has been pushed to take unlawful action against a proud and resolute nation merely because that nation is defending its legal rights enshrined in international instruments. Today's action by some members of the Security Council against Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, along with the measures taken in this regard in the past, do not meet the minimum standards of legitimacy and legality for the following reasons.

First, Iran's peaceful nuclear programme was brought to the Security Council in violation of the Agency's Statute. Iran had not violated, and therefore had not been in non-compliance with, its comprehensive safeguards agreement under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Iran signed the additional protocol in 2003, and began its voluntary implementation. That continued for two and a half years. Iran was therefore not obliged to implement its provisions prior to 2003. Our country accepted the modified Code 3.1 of the subsidiary arrangement in 2003 and had no obligation to implement it prior to that date. Therefore, Iran was only obliged, according to the comprehensive safeguards agreement, to inform the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) 180 days prior to feeding nuclear material into its facilities. We informed the IAEA about the uranium conversion facility by inviting the Agency's Director General to visit in the year 2000 — that is, four years prior to its operation in 2004 and four years before Iran was obliged to do so.

Secondly, Iran's nuclear programme has been, is and will remain absolutely peaceful and in no way poses any threat to international peace and security, and therefore does not fall within the purview of the Security Council. There is solid evidence and concrete arguments attesting to the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. In that regard, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the following three points.

The peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme has been confirmed by each and every IAEA report in the past several years, including the most recent one, which clearly stresses that

> "The Agency has been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran. Iran has provided the Agency with access to declared nuclear material and has

provided the required nuclear material accountancy reports".

As the latest example, the IAEA report of 22 February 2008 clearly attests to the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, both in the past and at present, and serves to strongly and unambiguously support our country's long-standing position that the allegations raised by a few States against the peaceful nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been entirely groundless. In the work plan concluded between Iran and the IAEA in August 2007, it was also emphasized that

> "The Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of the declared nuclear materials at the enrichment facilities in Iran and has therefore concluded that it remains in peaceful use." (*GOV/2007/48, attachment, IV, para. 4*)

On the basis of ideological and strategic grounds, Iran categorically rejects the development, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons, as well as all other weapons of mass destruction. That fundamental position has been reiterated by every senior Iranian official on numerous occasions. The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran has strongly stressed that position before through a religious verdict — a fatwa — and once again reiterated the same principled position during Mr. ElBaradei's recent visit to Tehran. The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran has emphasized repeatedly that Iran's nuclear programme has been and will remain absolutely peaceful, and that Iran is a leading country in international efforts to oppose nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

The IAEA Director General has stressed in his various statements that "the Agency does not have any data or evidence indicating that Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons". He has also said that "there is no evidence Iran's enrichment of uranium is intended for a military nuclear programme". In the wake of the national intelligence estimate report of the United States, which reversed many of its previous baseless allegations against Iran's nuclear programme, the IAEA Director General stressed that Iran had been "vindicated in saying it has not been working on a weapons programme".

Thirdly, in addition, the actions of the Security Council are unjustifiable because of the main pretext on the basis of which consideration of Iran's peaceful nuclear programme was imposed on the Security Council — namely, the outstanding issues — is now resolved and closed. The sponsors of today's resolution have argued in the past that Iran's peaceful nuclear programme should be dealt with by the Security Council due to unresolved outstanding questions. In order not to leave any stone unturned in its cooperation with the IAEA and to remove the much ballyhooed yet baseless pretext, Iran agreed to work with the Agency on a work plan to address and resolve the outstanding issues. In that regard, the text of the "Understandings of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IAEA on the Modalities of Resolution of the Outstanding Issues" was negotiated and finally concluded in August 2007.

The conclusion of the work plan, which has been described as a significant step forward by the IAEA Director General, was an essential turning point in our cooperation with the Agency. The same sponsors of today's resolution first tried cynically to overshadow the importance of the initiative, and when they failed to do so, they spared no effort to create all kinds of problems to hamper its successful implementation and, not least, strived to politicize the trend to the extent possible. The statement of the IAEA officials, who had rightly complained that "the US is mounting a deliberate campaign to derail Iranian-IAEA rapprochement", was noteworthy in this regard.

Those few countries have pursued their politically motivated agenda regardless of Iran's cooperation with the IAEA and the latter's report on such cooperation. Indeed, their warranted efforts to put the Agency and its officials under pressure and to influence its reports are well known and need no elaboration.

Despite all these negative policies and practices on the part of those countries, we resolutely implemented the work plan in a sincere and serious manner. Certain outstanding issues were addressed and resolved by Iran even while negotiations on the contents of the work plan were still ongoing. For instance, on 20 August 2007, well before the conclusion of the work plan, the Agency stated in regard to the plutonium issue that "earlier statements made by Iran are consistent with the Agency's findings, and thus this matter is resolved". Moreover, the Agency's report of 15 November 2007 stressed the resolution of most of the outstanding issues.

Finally, the latest report by the Agency, circulated on 22 February 2008, clearly declared the resolution and closure of all outstanding issues and emphasized in its paragraph 53 that "The Agency has been able to conclude that answers provided by Iran, in accordance to the work plan, are consistent with its findings" and "considers those questions no longer outstanding". Additionally, the IAEA Director General declared the resolution of all outstanding issues in his remarks after the release of the report and said, "We have managed to clarify all the remaining outstanding issues, including the most important issue, which is the scope and nature of Iran's enrichment programme".

While it was estimated that at least 18 months would be needed for the work plan to be implemented, Iran's unwavering and full cooperation with the Agency made it possible for the work plan to be implemented in less than six months.

It is worth mentioning that, based on the initial agreement with the Agency, we were only supposed to address the past remaining issues. Nevertheless, as a sign of good will and in line with its robust cooperation with the IAEA, the Islamic Republic of Iran considered the present issues as well. As a result, two important legal documents — the "Safeguards Approach Document" and "Facility Attachment" for Fuel Enrichment Plant in Natanz — were negotiated, concluded and finally put into force on 30 September 2007. Accordingly, the implementation of those documents has provided necessary assurances for the verification of enrichment activities in Iran for the present time and in the future.

By resolving the outstanding issues with regard to its past activities, on the one hand, and, on the other, by conducting all its present activities, including enrichment, under the full and continuous monitoring of the Agency on the basis of the IAEA Statute, the NPT and the comprehensive safeguards agreement, the Islamic Republic of Iran has removed any so-called concerns or ambiguities with regard to its peaceful nuclear activities in the past and present.

Now that the work plan has been fully implemented and the outstanding issues have been resolved, there exists no justification for the continuation of the politically motivated and misleading call of "lack of confidence" by a few countries, countries whose number hardly amounts to four among 192 Member States of the United Nations but who always mischievously proclaim themselves to be speaking on behalf of the international community or the whole world.

The IAEA Director General said 10 September 2007 that "Resolving all outstanding verification issues ... would go a long way towards building the confidence of the international community in the peaceful nature of Iran's past nuclear programme."

Indeed, those who did not want to allow the Agency to discharge its technical duties spared no efforts to undermine the momentum generated by the conclusion and implementation of the work plan and resorted to a systematic and relentless campaign of false claims, propaganda, intimidation and pressure aimed at the Agency, its Director General, some members of the Security Council and the work plan. This unhealthy and ill-intended campaign prompted a senior official of the IAEA to stress that "Since 2002, pretty much all the intelligence that's come to us [from the US] has proved to be wrong". The so-called alleged-studies issue is an example of such a fabrication and misinformation campaign.

While those baseless allegations — the alleged study — had not been an outstanding issue between Iran and the IAEA, a very organized and pre-planned propaganda campaign began even before the release of the latest IAEA report in order to eclipse the landmark accomplishment that Iran has made in its cooperation with the Agency in resolving the outstanding issues.

As stressed in the work plan, "Iran reiterated that it considers the ... alleged studies as politically motivated and baseless allegations ... [but] as a sign of good will and cooperation with the Agency, [stated that] upon receiving all related documents [Iran] will review and inform the Agency of its assessment."

The IAEA reports, particularly the most recent one, together with the statements of the Agency's officials, clearly indicate that the Iranian nation is committed to its international obligations and, at the same time, persistent in pursuing and exercising its legal rights.

The recent IAEA report clearly stresses that Iran's cooperation with the IAEA has been far beyond its treaty obligation and has been proactive. It points out in paragraph 55 that

> "The Agency has recently received from Iran additional information similar to that which Iran

had previously provided pursuant to the Additional Protocol, as well as updated design information. As a result, the Agency's knowledge about Iran's current declared nuclear programme has become clearer".

The IAEA Director-General yet again stressed Iran's robust cooperation with the Agency in his remarks after the release of the report by saying that

"Iran, in the past few months, has provided us with visits to many places that enable us to have a clearer picture of Iran's current programme".

In its latest report, the Agency has also stressed in several instances, including in paragraphs 11, 18, 24, 34 and 53, the conclusion that "Iran's statements are consistent with other information available to the Agency" or "are not inconsistent with its findings".

Undoubtedly, the full implementation of the work plan, and thus the resolution and closure of the outstanding issues, have eliminated the most basic pretexts and allegations on the basis of which Iran's peaceful nuclear programme was referred to the Security Council. The Security Council's involvement and the actions it has taken so far in that regard have been unwarranted and unconstructive, and have only damaged the credibility of the IAEA.

Iran's peaceful nuclear programme should be dealt with solely by the Agency. I wish to draw the Security Council's attention to the very important point that, based on the very last paragraph of the work plan,

"[t]he Agency and Iran agreed that after the implementation of the above work plan and the agreed modalities for resolving the outstanding issues, the implementation of safeguards in Iran will be conducted in a routine manner".

Therefore, the consideration of Iran's peaceful nuclear programme in no way falls within the purview of the Security Council. In fact, based on the IAEA reports and as a result of Iran's cooperation and the closure of the outstanding questions, not only does there remain no single reason or shred of legality for any new action by the Council, but also the illegality of the previous actions of the Council have become more abundantly clear.

Much has been said about suspension. Iran cannot and will not accept a requirement which is legally defective and politically coercive. History tells us that no amount of pressure, intimidation and threat will be able to coerce our nation into giving up its basic and legal rights. We have never attempted to impose our will on others; equally, we will never allow others to impose their unjust demands on us. We do not consider the call for suspension legitimate for, among others, the following reasons.

First, as we have stressed over and over again, no Government has the desire or the authority to suspend the exercise of the legal rights of its nation. Any demand from a nation to do so would be politically incorrect and legally flawed.

Second, neither in the IAEA's Statute, nor in the NPT safeguards, nor even in the Additional Protocol are enrichment and reprocessing prohibited or restricted. There is even no limit for the level of enrichment in the said documents.

Third, in all resolutions of the Board of Governors of the IAEA, suspension was considered to be a non-legally binding, voluntary and confidence-building measure.

Fourth, suspension was in place for more than two years and the IAEA, in each and every report from November 2003 to February 2006, repeatedly verified that Iran had fully suspended what it had agreed to suspend. During that period, it became clear that those insisting on suspension were indeed aiming to prolong and ultimately perpetuate it, and consequently to prevent the Iranian nation from exercising its legal rights.

Fifth, the attempt to make the suspension mandatory through the Security Council has been, from the outset, against the fundamental principles of international law, the non- proliferation Treaty and IAEA Board resolutions. The Security Council's resolutions that made the suspension mandatory also flout the stated position of the overwhelming majority of the international community.

Sixth, unquestionably, with the resolution of the outstanding issues related to the IAEA-reported conclusion of non-diversion in Iran's nuclear activities and with Iran's nuclear activities under the full and continuous monitoring of the Agency, there remains no pretext for the illegal request for suspension.

Seventh, the Security Council's decision to coerce Iran into suspension of its peaceful nuclear programme is also a gross violation of Article 25 of the

Charter. While Member States have agreed, in accordance with the said Article, to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the Charter, the Security Council cannot coerce countries into submitting either to its decisions taken in bad faith or to its demands negating the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter.

Eighth, we need to enrich uranium to provide fuel for the tens of nuclear reactors that we are building or planning to build in order to meet the growing needs of our country for energy. There has never been nor will there ever be guarantees that our needs for fuel will be completely provided for by foreign sources. It is worth mentioning that there is no single document that serves as a legally binding international instrument for the assurance of nuclear supplies to guarantee fuel for nuclear power plants.

The Security Council today is about to make an unjust and irrational decision on Iran's peaceful nuclear programme. History will ultimately render its judgment over the behaviour of the Council. Even disregarding the Council's unfair actions towards Iran today, as the representative of a founding Member of this Organization I wish to express our grave concern and dismay regarding the path that the Security Council has chosen and pursued. We all know that the United Nations is expected to be an institution for addressing international problems and defending the rights of its Member States in this shrinking world. The Security Council should be inherently and meaningfully a Council for security — a body that is entrusted with the important task of maintaining international peace and security. It should be a secure and safe place where the rights of nations are not violated and are fully respected. Can one claim that the Council has performed its immense duty in good faith and as requested by the Charter? The answer is not definitely affirmative. Surely the overwhelming majority of the Members of this Organization are seriously concerned about the behaviour of the Council, which has extensively undermined its integrity and credibility.

A question to ponder is: how will nations remember the behaviour of this important organ? A question arises as to why, after all the crimes of the Zionist regime in the Palestinian territories, which have shocked the whole world and have been described, inter alia, as ethnic cleansing, genocide and war crimes by the international community, the Council has failed to take any effective measures to put an end to those crimes? Why has the Council failed to issue a simple press statement or been able to pay even lip service to the issue of Palestinian suffering in view of the daily Israeli atrocities in the Palestinian territories, particularly in Gaza, that have led to the killing and wounding of hundreds of innocent Palestinian people in the past several weeks? Undoubtedly, the Security Council's previous inaction and silence regarding the abhorrent crimes of the Israeli regime have resulted in the current holocaust that is being carried out in the Gaza Strip by the Zionist regime.

The people of Iran will never forget the inaction of the Security Council with regard to Saddam Hussein's attack against Iran on 22 September 1980, the invasion that resulted in an eight-year-long war waged against Iran, with unspeakable suffering and losses for our nation. That act of aggression did not trouble the same permanent members of the Council who have sought the adoption of the resolution against Iran today, nor did they consider it a threat against international peace and security. Nor did the Security Council, for several years, bother to deal with the use of chemical weapons by the former Iraqi dictator against Iranian civilians and military personnel and Iraqi Kurds, particularly in Halabcheh, chemical weapons that were provided to Saddam Hussein by some of the sponsors and supporters of today's draft resolution. No amount of explanation could describe the disastrous consequences of that unacceptable behaviour by the Security Council.

Indeed, those are not the only examples of the Council, due to its inherent deficiencies and due to its structure and voting mechanism, being unable to discharge its responsibilities. That is why the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States believe that this Council must be overhauled.

Today, the Council's credibility will be further damaged because of the political motives of a few countries, political motives that have prevented the Council from heeding the judgement of a technical body of the United Nations, namely, the IAEA, while the IAEA clearly acknowledges that Iran's nuclear programme is peaceful. Some countries deliberately undermine the work of that Agency, which is part of the United Nations. It therefore appears that the Security Council attaches no value even to other United Nations institutions and bodies. It is no wonder that the Security Council, which has repeatedly

encroached on the mandates and authorities of other United Nations bodies, cannot be trusted to respect the views and judgements of other United Nations agencies.

The Council's behaviour in undermining the credibility and integrity of the Agency will only serve the interests of those who prefer to ignore the IAEA, such as the Israeli regime, which, with hundreds of nuclear warheads in its possession, poses the most serious threat to international and regional peace and security. It will also serve the interests of those who have never wished for a strong, independent and impartial Agency.

That is truly a serious question. Is it not time for the Council to respect the judgement of an institution that is part of the United Nations system, or to respect the legitimate rights of a great nation with a long history of civilization and peaceful coexistence with other nations? That right has been recognized by international law, and its exercise poses no threat to international peace and security.

What the Islamic Republic of Iran is pursuing is the exercise of its rights in accordance with the NPT and under the supervision of the IAEA, and nothing more. Is that an illegitimate demand? Is it justice, to punish a nation that behaves according to the rules and regulations?

Finally, the future security of the world depends on how the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, will function in a just and impartial manner.

In reality, people across the globe have now lost their trust in the Security Council and consider the actions of the Council as the results of political pressure exerted by a few Powers to advance their own agendas. That is a compelling issue, which the Council must address in order to restore its credibility.

In view of all of those facts and realities, the following legitimate question arises: can the Security Council still be known as a "council for security"? Can it be regarded as a just, impartial and credible organ of the United Nations? I leave that judgment to the esteemed Members of the United Nations and all fair-minded people around the world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to speak before the vote.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): South Africa regrets that the sponsors of the draft resolution have persisted with the same substantive text that they had tabled before the latest report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was even issued and hence, the draft resolution appears not to adequately take into account the progress made on the basis of the work plan agreed between the IAEA and Iran.

Moreover, the adoption of the new draft resolution, which imposes further punitive sanctions, could apparently not even be postponed until the IAEA Board of Governors had a full opportunity to consider the matter and take account of the verbal update of the Director General of the IAEA. That gives the international community the impression that the verification work and important progress made by the Agency is virtually irrelevant to the sponsors of this draft resolution.

The rationale for bringing the Iran issue to the Security Council in the first place was, we were told, to reinforce the decisions of the IAEA and to enhance its authority, and yet the current draft resolution does not accurately reflect what is happening at the IAEA. We are seriously concerned about the implications of this situation for the credibility of the Security Council, and the only reason we will vote in favour of the resolution is to preserve the previous decisions of the Council that Iran has not fully implemented.

The IAEA is the only international authority that can verify and provide the necessary assurances as to the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It is therefore unfortunate that the Security Council gives the impression that it is in such great haste to decide on a series of further punitive sanctions that it does not wish even to consider the significant progress being made through the IAEA to provide the international community with important factual information on the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguards in Iran.

The report by the IAEA Director General issued on 22 February 2008 clearly shows that all outstanding safeguards issues, which are also included in the work plan between the IAEA and Iran, have been clarified due to the cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. The IAEA has thus far not found any evidence of diversion, and all material has been accounted for. Furthermore, those issues that originally gave rise to serious concern

resulting in the demand for the confidence-building measures, including suspending the uranium enrichment programme, have now also been clarified.

On the basis of the factual situation available to us we also have to recognize that since the adoption of resolution 1747 (2007) in March of last year, which South Africa supported, the situation has further changed following the release of the United States National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which concluded that Iran does not have a current nuclear weapons programme. The NIE seems consistent with the IAEA's findings to date.

To the extent that all the outstanding issues have now been clarified, at least there ought to be increased confidence in the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. It is important to allow the verification process to proceed on its current course.

Also, given the context of the recent allegations of weaponization activities, the need for continued factual and reliable information about Iran's current nuclear activities, based on increased access by and cooperation with the IAEA, can be said to be all the more important.

It is important not to jeopardize any of the gains made. Rather, we should seek to build on the progress made through systematic and continued verification work by the IAEA. This approach will help to establish the facts and encourage negotiations among concerned parties with a view to reducing tension and further escalation. Given the confidence deficit that existed earlier, we need to move forward in a responsible and balanced manner because we are dealing with a highly sensitive matter that can have serious implications in a volatile region.

As a country that is firmly committed to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and to non-proliferation, South Africa does not wish to see a nuclear-weaponized Iran or the denial of the right of any signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to exploit the peaceful applications of nuclear technology with appropriate safeguards. Also, South Africa does not want to see a war break out over the nuclear programme in Iran.

The suspension of enrichment activities may under no circumstances become a goal in itself. In addition, it is incumbent on the Council to assure Iran that the call for suspension is not a smokescreen for any indefinite suspension or termination. In this regard, it would also be important to terminate the sanctions once the IAEA has addressed the remaining issues.

We would have preferred that the resolution not contain the controversial provision that allows for searches of certain Iranian vessels and aircraft, even subject to very strict limitations, as this could spark confrontation and further threaten international peace and security. Furthermore, the restrictions on dual-use goods and on loans and credits must not be allowed to have a negative impact on the civilian population of Iran. Members of the Security Council that will vote in favour of the current resolution, including South Africa, have a special obligation to the Iranian people and must exercise the highest degree of scrutiny and oversight of the implementation of sanctions to ensure that there are no unintended consequences and that the focus remains solely on the nuclear programme.

Whilst we have decided to vote for this resolution, it is imperative that we should now work creatively to defuse the confrontation in order to allow for a resumption of negotiations towards a sustainable, peaceful solution of this issue.

Finally, South Africa wishes to reaffirm the principle that once the peaceful nature of the Iran nuclear programme has been establish, Iran will enjoy the rights and responsibilities that any member of the NPT also enjoys.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya attaches great importance to the issue of non-proliferation, the subject that we are considering today. As all members of the Council know, Libya has voluntarily renounced its facilities and programmes related to weapons of mass destruction. We are certain that the only guarantee of non-use of these weapons is their total elimination.

In this context, we are in favour of the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world, including in the Middle East region. We have supported all relevant resolutions adopted in this area, including the resolutions of the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted with respect to the Middle East, as well as pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolution 62/18 of 2007.

Non-proliferation and disarmament together form a single comprehensive issue which should be dealt with without selectivity. All States without exception must submit their nuclear facilities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards regime. We deplore the fact that the Security Council has not attached adequate importance to the issue of Israel's nuclear weapons, in spite of the fact that the Israelis are refusing to accede to the NPT or to submit their facilities to the IAEA safeguards regime.

Moreover, Israel has declared that it possesses nuclear weapons but has not respected repeated international calls to disarm. This attitude could have terrible effects on the region and on the world, especially since it, together with the massacres that are being committed in the occupied Palestinian territories right now, demonstrates that the Israeli regime is terrorist and irresponsible and does not take into consideration international law or ethics.

Libya believes that it is extremely important that the Security Council address this subject in a comprehensive way in order to convince all States in the region to accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. That could enhance the Security Council's legitimacy, especially with regard to the procedures it can adopt. The Council's selectivity has given rise to questions about the Council's true objectives.

Our commitment to nuclear non-proliferation must not make us forget the right of all States parties to the NPT — including the Islamic Republic of Iran — to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to acquire and develop related technology. The 22 February 2008 report of the IAEA Director General shows that essential progress has been made on the Iranian nuclear issue and that the majority of pending issues have been resolved. It also shows that there is now greater clarity with regard to Iran's declared nuclear programme. It was our hope that those positive developments would be taken into account and that negotiations and diplomatic contacts would be continuing with a view to resolving contentious issues and with a view to reinforcing the status of the IAEA as the appropriate body to deal with this problem.

For our part, we did not agree with other Council members about the usefulness of a resolution imposing additional sanctions on Iran, or that this would help us achieve a solution; it might instead cause the situation to deteriorate. We had asked that the text reflect the content of the latest report of the IAEA Director General and that the draft resolution address the Iranian nuclear programme in the context of concerns related to the Middle East in general.

Because the countries that formulated the text of the draft resolution before us have taken into consideration some of the concerns we share with other members — and while, although the majority of Council members consider that it is useful to adopt a draft resolution of this kind, we do not share that view — we have decided to join the unanimous opinion in the Council and to vote in favour of the draft resolution, so that the Security Council can speak with a single voice.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): As a responsible party to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Viet Nam attaches great importance to all three major pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; respect for the rights of all parties to development, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; and the pursuit by every party of negotiations on measures relating to ending the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. We hold that the parties' full implementation of their obligations under the NPT and their full enjoyment of the benefits that the Treaty brings will contribute effectively to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the social and economic development of States parties to the Treaty.

Keeping in mind the importance it attaches to those three major pillars of the NPT, Viet Nam has followed the Iran nuclear issue closely and with great interest in seeing it resolved by peaceful means and through dialogue. Viet Nam has always welcomed and supported the efforts of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as those of concerned countries or groups of countries to that end. At international forums including the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the IAEA and in its bilateral dealings with other countries, Viet Nam has consistently affirmed the aforementioned position and has contributed to the promotion of international dialogue and cooperation aimed at settling the outstanding issues in this connection.

Viet Nam actively participated in the process of negotiating the text of the draft resolution contained in document S/2008/141 and, on the basis of its initial elements, proposed changes to the following effect:

that Iran's cooperation with the IAEA and the progress in the implementation of the IAEA-Iran work plan be more positively recognized; that the authority and role of the IAEA as the body mandated to resolve the non-proliferation issues within the framework of the NPT be more adequately reflected; that the right of States to carry out normal international trade activities be respected; and that implementation by States of provisions of the draft resolution must be in accordance with their national legislation and consistent with international law, in particular the law of the sea and relevant international civil aviation agreements.

With the incorporation of such changes that we and other Council members proposed, and given the following facts — the fact that both the draft resolution and the statement to be issued by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States advocate a diplomatic and negotiated solution to the Iran nuclear issue; the fact that the 22 February 2008 report of the Director General of the IAEA, while recognizing progress in Iran's cooperation with the IAEA, indicates that Iran still needs to respond to requests by the Security Council and the IAEA; the fact that the scope of implementation envisaged in this draft resolution is basically the same as that in the previous resolutions, namely resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), adopted by consensus by the Council — Viet Nam will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/2008/141.

Having decided to vote in favour of the draft resolution, we are strongly convinced that favourable conditions must be created for the peaceful resolution of the Iran nuclear issue, including cessation of hostile policies against Iran, assurance of Iran's legitimate security interests and respect for the right of Iran to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We also believe that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the Middle East, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and the adherence by all States in the region to the NPT would be positive steps in this direction.

Finally, while hailing the new progress in cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, we are desirous to see Iran's efforts positively matched in the coming period.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I should like to begin by thanking the co-sponsors for their efforts in consulting with the Council's member States on the draft resolution before us today. Before I proceed, permit me to reiterate Indonesia's principled position with regard to the issue before the Council.

First, Indonesia underscores the imperative to find a peaceful solution to any question related to nuclear non-proliferation. Secondly, any solution must be guided by the need to protect the integrity of multilateral arrangements, particularly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is fundamentally based upon three main pillars, namely, non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear disarmament. Finally, it is a matter of fact that a State's effort to exercise its inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy borders on the proliferation aspect. In that regard, Indonesia has full confidence in the credibility, independence and efficiency of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as the sole competent authority for the verification of the respective safeguards obligations of Member States.

In determining the right course of action with regard to the issue under discussion, Indonesia has been guided by the important information contained in the latest report of the Director General of IAEA, issued on 22 February 2008, which revealed several key findings.

Indonesia appreciates Iran's efforts to show greater cooperation and, at the same time, more transparency to the Agency. The Agency has thus been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran. In addition, the report stated that the Agency's knowledge about Iran's current declared nuclear programme has become clearer due to Iran's provision of information similar to which it had provided pursuant to the additional protocol. Furthermore, Iran has provided the Agency with access to declared nuclear material and has provided the required nuclear material accountancy reports in connection with declared nuclear material and activities.

We have carefully considered both the report and the draft resolution before the Council today. With regard to the outstanding issues, we note that the Agency considered that all remaining outstanding issues contained in the work plan, with the exception

of one issue, have been resolved. The report stated that, contrary to the decisions of the Security Council, Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activities and, in addition, has started the development of new-generation centrifuges and continued its construction of the IR-40 reactor and its operation of the heavy water production plant. For the remaining issue — that is, the alleged weaponization studies — the report of the IAEA clearly noted that the Agency has not detected the use of nuclear material. However, the report also stated that the Agency is not yet in a position to determine the full nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It implies, therefore, that some specific demands stipulated in resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) have not been met. However, it is important to note that notable progress has been made in resolving the outstanding issues between Iran and the IAEA, as demanded by those resolutions.

We have been keen to ensure that there is synergy and complementarity between the report and the IAEA's efforts generally, on the one hand, and the letter and spirit of the draft resolution, on the other. We cannot fail to note the well-calibrated nature of the report — recognizing important progress in its cooperation with the Agency as well as the facts of Iran's lack of compliance with Security Council resolutions. It depicts well the complexity and the mixed picture of the issue. It had been our expectation that the draft resolution would reflect those complex dynamics and mixed findings and not succumb to an overly one-dimensional characterization of where we are today.

We note that the additional sanctions in the present draft resolution have been described as being incremental, targeted at non-proliferation areas and reversible, and that the Council would suspend its implementation should Iran curtail all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, as verified by the IAEA.

However, Indonesia remains to be convinced of the efficacy of adopting additional sanctions at this juncture. Essentially, we are not convinced that more sanctions — however incremental, well-targeted and reversible — would move us forward in resolving the question of Iran's nuclear programme. Will they instead have a potential negative impact at a time when progress is being made? We wonder, therefore, whether imposing more sanctions at this juncture is the most sensible approach. We need to pose the question whether imposing more sanctions is the most sensible course of action to instil confidence and trust and engender cooperation between all the parties concerned. It is our belief that, ultimately, lack of confidence and trust lies at the heart of the matter. We must avoid more of the same.

It is our expectation that Iran will continue to engage actively with the Agency in order to build confidence about the scope and nature of its nuclear programme. Such a development is not without relevance to our deliberations today. After all, the Iran dossier was referred to the Council to encourage that country to resolve outstanding verification issues with the IAEA and to restore the international community's confidence in its nuclear programme. While yet to be completed, that has begun and is making progress.

The suspension of enrichment-related activities is an instrument. It is a means to an end. It is not, as we understand it, an end by itself, isolated from developments in Iran's cooperation with the IAEA. The IAEA-Iran work plan constitutes a platform to restore the confidence of the international community. Any interruption of that confidence-building process will only threaten to unravel the important gains that have been made.

The NPT guarantees the inalienable right of all States parties to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in accordance with the Treaty. Nonetheless, we are often trapped in a vicious cycle, as there is no guarantee given to non-nuclear States regarding the security of supply of nuclear technology and materials for peaceful purposes. They remain prone to suspicion in their attempts to exercise their rights.

In order to put an end to that cycle, it is imperative for all of us to move forward and in a more creative and constructive manner. We must revive and renew the initiative to establish a multilateral arrangement, as part and parcel of the NPT, to guarantee the security of supply of nuclear technology and materials, including highly enriched uranium. Such an arrangement would provide certainty, as well as assurances, to Iran, and eventually put an end to the existing suspicions — thereby removing any reason for anyone to question the peaceful nature of Iran's current enrichment process.

As a faithful State party to the NPT, Indonesia is always of the view that the three pillars of the NPT should be pursued in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner. We have consistently expressed our view that we should not only emphasize the non-proliferation obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States, but that we must also require nuclear-weapon States to comply fully with their nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the NPT, on which there has barely been any progress so far.

We are aware that resolution 1747 (2007) provides for the possibility of further appropriate measures in the event of Iranian non-compliance. There is, however, nothing automatic about such measures. Further decisions will be needed — hence our deliberations today. Above all, it is important to recognize that the conditions prevailing today are different than those on the eve of the adoption of resolution 1747 (2007). The strategic goals of resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) are being achieved. Iran is cooperating with the IAEA. At this juncture, more sanctions are not the best course.

For those considerations and reasons, Indonesia will abstain on the draft resolution before us today.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it (S/2008/141). Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Indonesia

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The result of the voting is as follows: 14 votes in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1803 (2008).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by reading out the text of a statement which has been agreed by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with the support of the High Representative of the European Union (EU). The statement reads as follows:

> "Today the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1803 (2008), reflecting the international community's ongoing serious concerns about the proliferation risks of the Iranian nuclear programme. This is the third time that the United Nations Security Council has sent a strong message of international resolve to Iran by adopting a sanctions resolution under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations on Iran's nuclear programme. We deplore Iran's continued failure to comply with its United Nations Security Council and IAEA Board requirements, in particular by expanding its enrichment-related activities. We note the progress made in implementing the IAEA-Iran work plan and the IAEA's serious concerns about the 'alleged studies', which are critical to an assessment of a possible military dimension to Iran's nuclear programme. We call upon Iran to heed the requirement of the United Nations Security Council and the IAEA, including the suspension of its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.
>
> "We remain committed to an early negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and reaffirm our commitment to a dual-track approach. We reconfirm the proposals we presented to Iran in June 2006 and are prepared to further develop them. Our proposals will offer substantial opportunities for political, security and economic benefits to Iran and to the region. We urge Iran to take this opportunity to engage with us all and to find a negotiated way forward. We reiterate our recognition of the right of Iran to develop, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with its NPT obligations. We reconfirm that once the confidence of the international community in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear

programme is restored it will be treated in the same manner as that of any non-nuclear-weapon State party to the NPT. We remain ready to negotiate future arrangements, modalities and timing in this respect once the conditions for negotiations have been established.

"This will require further diplomatic efforts and innovative approaches. To that end, we have asked Dr. Javier Solana, the High Representative of the European Union for Common Foreign and Security Policy, to meet with Dr. Saeed Jalili, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, and to address the interests and concerns of both sides in a manner which can gradually create the conditions for the opening of negotiations."

That concludes the statement on behalf of the six Foreign Ministers.

I should like now to make some remarks in my national capacity.

First, I welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Iran. Many points he has made in his statement are open to clarification, argument and correction, but that would take a long time. Let me confine myself to the following points.

The British Government welcomes the very broad support for this Security Council resolution. Its adoption sends a clear message to the Government and the people of Iran. It underlines yet again that the international community is profoundly concerned that Iran might be intending to use its nuclear programme for military purposes. The United Kingdom does not have confidence that Iran's programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes. On the contrary, to us their nuclear programme only makes sense as part of plan to develop, at the least, a nuclear weapons capability.

This resolution is a necessary response to Iran's continued failure to comply with the requirements of the IAEA Board and the Security Council that, while we try to build confidence in Iran's nuclear intentions, Iran has to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activity and work on all heavy-water-related projects; has to resolve all outstanding questions; and has to implement and ratify the Additional Protocol.

The progress that Iran has made with the IAEA addresses only one of those issues, and then only partially. Iran has refused to answer the most difficult questions about its past programme or to meet IAEA requests to interview named Iranian officials. And, as the IAEA reports, far from suspending its enrichment activities, Iran has intensified its efforts, including by trying to develop a new generation of centrifuges. Overall, Iran has clearly failed to abide by its legal obligations under successive Security Council resolutions.

The political statement agreed by the Foreign Ministers of the European Three (E3) plus Three, with the support of the EU High Representative, makes clear that we remain committed to a negotiated solution on the basis of the far-reaching proposals that the six countries agreed in Vienna in June 2006 and which, since that time, we have consistently urged Iran to accept.

Our offer would give Iran everything it needs to develop a modern civil nuclear power programme, including legally guaranteed supplies of nuclear fuel. The offer provides Iran with a basis for a transformed relationship with all members of the international community, including with the United States. It is a matter of great regret that for the past 20 months Iran has ignored our offer.

Iran's leaders should listen to what the international community is saying rather than misleading their people by misrepresenting our actions and misrepresenting the reports of the IAEA on their nuclear programme. I commend the efforts of the Director General and the officials of the IAEA, but Iran's failure to do what is required of them, as clearly stated by the IAEA, left us no option but to seek further measures in the Security Council.

These further measures today strengthen the restrictions on individuals and entities closely associated with Iran's proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities and with its ballistic missile programme. They increase vigilance over the activities of Iranian banks, particularly Banks Melli and Saderat, which we believe are engaged in proliferation-sensitive activities; they introduce a provision for careful scrutiny of new commitments for export credits and guarantees to Iran; and they encourage Member States to inspect cargo to and from Iran where there are grounds to believe that prohibited items are being transported.

By adopting this resolution, the Security Council has continued its incremental and proportionate approach, gradually increasing the pressure on Iran to address the widely shared concerns about its nuclear programme. Despite Iran's refusal to engage thus far, the British Government urges Iran's leaders to take the opportunity to suspend its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and to cooperate fully with the IAEA, paving the way for the suspension of sanctions and for the start of negotiations which would bring far-reaching benefits to the Iranian people and greater stability to the Middle East. If Iran does not take this opportunity, then, as the resolution makes clear, the Security Council is committed to implementing further additional measures.

With this new resolution, the Security Council is reaffirming the clear choice confronting Iran's leaders: to cooperate with the international community and enjoy the benefits of normal relations with the rest of the world or to pursue their nuclear programme in disregard of international concerns and worsen still further their international isolation. The choice is for Iran's leaders to make. The British Government hopes they take the positive path. The Iranian people deserve no less.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the adoption by a very large majority — indeed, by near unanimity — of resolution 1803 (2008). The resolution is the outcome of a collective approach that led its three authors — France, the United Kingdom and Germany — as well as China, the Russian Federation, the United States and ultimately the Council as a whole, to deem it necessary to send a clear and firm message to Iran.

Why are we here? The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) establishes a regime based on confidence, to which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is the keystone. That confidence is necessary to guarantee our security. It is also the condition allowing all to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is not arbitrary, but based on concrete facts.

Iran concealed a clandestine nuclear programme for 20 years, in violation of its Safeguards Agreement and without a credible civilian use. It developed that programme through a network that serviced military programmes throughout the world. It has revealed no information on its own initiative, and has cooperated with the Agency only sporadically since it was exposed. While the enrichment to make fissile material was being undertaken, Iran was working on various techniques that can be used to develop nuclear weapons. In 1987, Iran also received and preserved a document on the conversion of uranium hexafluoride gas into metallic uranium and on the melding of enriched metallic uranium into hemispherical forms, which has no use other than the manufacture of a nuclear weapon. Iran is also actively developing long-range missiles.

Given that disturbing situation, the international community's requests to restore confidence — requests iterated by the Board of Governors of the IAEA and the Security Council in its resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) — are simple and understandable to all. Iran must suspend its sensitive activities, offer full transparency under the Additional Protocol to the IAEA, and shed full light on the outstanding issues.

Bearing in mind the future of the NPT, if anyone can violate its safeguards agreements, refuse to implement the resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council, and engage in dangerous activities on that basis, the entire regime will be under threat. We cannot afford that while the demand for nuclear energy is greater than ever because global development requires it.

Of course, there is no question of refusing Iran the right to use nuclear energy peacefully when it meets its international obligations. France, which is committed to distributing such energy, is particularly sensitive to that matter, but we must bear in mind the dangers that would arise with respect to Iran's implementation of a policy of fait accompli. In that volatile region, it would raise the risk of confrontation, and that is what we wish to avoid above all else.

The Security Council is meeting today for the fourth time on this issue because it has noted that Iran has yet to respect its obligations. The most recent report of the IAEA Director General has once again sharpened our concern. The Director General has concluded that the IAEA cannot yet take a position on the nature and scope of the Iranian nuclear programme, and has called on Iran once again to build confidence in the peaceful nature of its programme and to act on the Security Council's requests.

A new and disturbing aspect that is developed at length in the report is that of Iran's presumed militarization activities. The Director General calls them a matter of serious concern. If we are to maintain confidence in the NPT, we have no choice but to adopt sanctions against that country. In that respect, I express the position of the Federal Republic of Germany as well.

Today's resolution adds names to the list of people or entities subject to assets freezes due to their connection with Iran's proliferation activities. It imposes a travel ban on those most closely involved and prevents the provision to Iran of dual-use material. It calls for vigilance in transactions with Iranian banks, in particular the Mali and Sadat banks. For the same reason, it calls for limiting the granting of export credits to Iran. Lastly, it encourages States to ensure that air or maritime cargo transported by two Iranian companies involved in trafficking does not include prohibited material.

Despite all this, our approach is not punitive. The sanctions aim at ensuring the credibility of our approach, but our priority is to find a diplomatic solution. The Security Council has indicated that sanctions will be suspended if Iran suspends its sensitive activities, and repealed if Iran fully respects its obligations. In June 2006, along with our German, British, American, Russian and Chinese partners, we offered Iran a proposal for political, economic and nuclear cooperation. Iran did not wish to consider that offer. We urgently ask it once again to do so. That is also the message sent to Iran by the ministers for foreign affairs of Germany, China, the United States, France, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation, which was read out earlier by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom.

We therefore once again extend a hand to the Iranian people in the hope that its leaders will accept it.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): The United States welcomes the adoption of resolution 1803 (2008). Iran's violations of Security Council resolutions not only continue, but are deepening. Instead of suspending its enrichment and reprocessing activities as required by the Council, Iran chose to expand dramatically its number of operating centrifuges and to develop a new generation of centrifuges, testing one of them with nuclear fuel. Iran continues to construct its heavy water research reactor at Arak, a potential source of weapons-useable plutonium, and still has not implemented the Additional Protocol.

Once again, Iran has not made the choice the world had hoped for; once again, the Security Council has no choice but to act. At stake is the security of a vital region of the world and the credibility of the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as they seek to hold Iran to its nuclear non-proliferation commitments.

The latest IAEA report states that Iran has not met its obligation to fully disclose its past nuclear weapons programme. On the core issue of whether Iran's nuclear programme is strictly peaceful, the report showed no serious progress. The IAEA presented Iran with documents assembled over a period of years from multiple Member States and the Agency's own investigations. The documents detailed Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear warhead, including designs for a missile re-entry vehicle, and showed other possible undeclared activities with nuclear material. Iran dismissed these documents as baseless and fabricated, but the IAEA does not share that conclusion.

Instead of slogans and obfuscations, the international community needs answers from Iran. For our part, I want to ask the Iranian authorities: "Why were you secretly working on designs for a nuclear warhead and its miniaturization to fit on a missile — all in violation of your obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? Why not tell the IAEA what happened and why?" On a matter of such global importance, the international community must be able to believe Iran's declarations that its nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes. Iranian leaders must, as a first step, cease enrichment and reprocessing activities and make a full disclosure of all Iran's weapons-related work. We agree with the IAEA that, until Iran declares all of its nuclear activities and ceases its weapons-related work, Iran's nuclear activities cannot be verified as peaceful.

Iran has still not fully implemented the Additional Protocol, which the IAEA requires to determine what other undeclared activities are taking place. I want to ask the Iranian leaders: why are you not fully implementing the additional safeguards? What are you hiding? As long as the Iranian Government continues to be secretive about its nuclear

activities, refusing to implement the Additional Protocol, we must inevitably conclude that Iran is hiding weapons work and thereby preserving or establishing options for a nuclear weapons programme. Iran wants us to believe that its nuclear programme is peaceful, but it must be transparent with IAEA inspectors. It should implement the Additional Protocol, as the Council and the IAEA have repeatedly called for.

The latest IAEA report states that Iran is not suspending its sensitive nuclear activities. For almost two years now, this Council has required Iran to suspend all of its enrichment-related, reprocessing and heavy-water-related activities. To increase Iran's incentives to cooperate with the Council, we have imposed sanctions, to which the Council has added once again today. I want to ask the Iranian leaders: if your goal is to generate nuclear power for peaceful purposes, why do you court increasing international isolation, economic pressure and more, for a purported goal more easily and inexpensively obtained with the diplomatic solution we and others offer?

The Iranian ambassador did not answer the questions I have raised. He devoted his remarks to distorting the official record of the IAEA. He stated explicitly that Iran will not comply with the Council's demand to suspend enrichment. Iran continues to make the wrong choice, to choose the path of defiance and to divert attention from its nuclear programme by exploiting the plight of innocent Palestinians and bashing Israel.

I want the Iranian people and others around the world to know that the United States recognizes Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. They should know that the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany have offered to help Iran develop civil nuclear power, if it complies with the Security Council's demand — a very reasonable demand — to suspend enrichment. They should know that the so-called P5+1 package of incentives includes active international support to build state-of-the-art light-water reactors and reliable access to nuclear fuel.

The United States also supports Russia's supply of fuel for Iran's nuclear power plant in Bushehr. The delivery of that fuel exposes Iran's false claim that it needs to enrich uranium for civil nuclear power. A total of 17 countries generating nuclear power today purchase their fuel on the international market rather than enrich uranium themselves. The Russian offer would provide fuel to Iran in a reliable way and would not contribute to proliferation.

Iran should do what other States have done to eliminate any doubts that their nuclear programme is peaceful. Many States have made the decision to abandon programmes to produce a nuclear weapon; two of them sit on the Security Council today as my colleagues: South Africa and Libya. Other countries that have stepped away from past nuclear weapon aspirations include Brazil, Argentina, Romania, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Those countries did not see their security diminished as a result of their decisions — indeed, one could easily say that their security has been enhanced — nor did they lose their right to develop nuclear energy. We urge Iran to take the same path that those countries have chosen.

The international community has good reason to be concerned about Iran's activities to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. The present Iranian regime, armed with nuclear weapons, would pose a greater potential danger to the region and to the world. The Iranian Government has been a destabilizing force in the broader Middle East and beyond. Contrary to its statements, Iran has been funding and supporting terrorists and militants for operations in Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Iraq and Afghanistan. Its assistance has killed countless innocent civilians. The President of Iran has made many reprehensible statements embracing the objective of destroying a Member State of the United Nations.

Because of those factors, the international community cannot allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons. If Iran continues down its current path, it would likely fuel proliferation activities in the region, which, in turn, could cause the demise of the NPT regime itself.

The ministerial statement agreed to by the permanent five members of the Council and Germany shows that we remain committed to a diplomatic solution. If Iran shares that commitment, it will suspend its enrichment and reprocessing activities and allow diplomacy to succeed. It gives us no pleasure, but rather regret, to have to pass another sanctions resolution. But our vote today demonstrates that the Council will act when countries violate their international obligations. We hope Iran will engage in constructive negotiations over the future of its nuclear

programme. Such negotiations, if successful, would have profound benefits for Iran and the Iranian people.

I want to close with a message to the people of Iran. America respects you and your great country. We want your country to be a full partner in the international community. As President Bush has said, if Iran respects its international obligations, it will have no better partner than the United States of America.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council has just adopted a new resolution on the Iranian nuclear issue. This is the fourth Security Council resolution on the issue since July 2006. It reflects not only the international concern over the issue, but also the expectations of all parties for an early, peaceful settlement of the issue through diplomatic negotiations.

At present, developments regarding the Iranian nuclear issue are mixed. On the one hand, the latest report by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) states that the Agency can verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran and has no concrete information about possible current undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran. Iran has clarified a series of outstanding issues such as uranium contamination, polonium experiments and the uranium metal document and provided information similar to that which it had previously provided pursuant to the Additional Protocol. China welcomes the previously mentioned cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. On the other hand, the report also points out that Iran has not suspended uranium enrichment activities, as required by the Security Council resolutions, has started the development of new-generation centrifuges and continues construction of its heavy-water reactor and production of heavy water, while issues relevant to the possible dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme remain outstanding.

As the impasse on the Iranian nuclear issue is not yet broken, the international community is increasingly calling for greater diplomatic efforts, in the hopes that the parties concerned can find a breakthrough point soon and bring the issue back onto the track of settlement.

It is against that background that the Security Council once again adopted a new resolution on the Iranian nuclear issue. Like the previous three resolutions, it is not aimed at punishing Iran, but is aimed at urging Iran's return to the negotiating table and thus reactivating a new round of diplomatic efforts. The sanctions measures are not targeted at the Iranian people and will not affect normal economic and financial activities between Iran and other countries. All the sanctions measures are reversible. That is to say, if Iran suspends uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities and complies with the relevant IAEA and Security Council resolutions, the sanctions will be suspended and even terminated.

China wishes to reiterate that sanctions can never fundamentally resolve the issue. They can only serve as a means to promote reconciliation and negotiations. The best way to resolve the issue remains diplomatic negotiations. We call upon all parties concerned to adopt a highly responsible and constructive attitude, show the necessary flexibility as appropriate, give full play to initiative and creativity and demonstrate determination and sincerity in resuming negotiations.

We call upon the parties to make unremitting efforts to enhance all-round diplomatic endeavours, seek a solution that will not only ensure Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy but also address the international concern over nuclear non-proliferation, and strive to achieve an early, long-term, comprehensive and proper solution of the Iranian nuclear issue. We call upon Iran to fully comply with the IAEA and Security Council resolutions as soon as possible.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the six countries have issued a joint statement, in which they reiterate their commitment to resolving the issue through diplomatic negotiations and express their readiness to strengthen diplomatic efforts and adopt creative approaches to vigorously facilitate the resumption of negotiations. China hopes that all parties concerned will seize the opportunity, engage in closer contacts and dialogue on the basis of equality and mutual respect, increase mutual trust and reduce misperceptions, address on another's concerns and seek an approach that is acceptable to all for the resumption of negotiations.

China is ready to work with all parties to make a contribution to the peaceful settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation understands the position of Iran with respect to the resolution that the Security Council has just

adopted, but we deeply regret the adjectives that were used by its Permanent Representative. We cannot accept that, on this case, he accuses the Security Council of being a mere tool of some countries and says that the action that it is taking is illegal or illegitimate.

While we acknowledge and value the progress that has been made with respect to confidence-building, in our opinion, there are still areas of non-compliance on the part of Iran with respect to the Council's resolutions. Costa Rica is convinced that the present resolution is a necessary consequence of non-compliance with previous resolutions of this Council.

For Costa Rica, a Council meeting on non-proliferation is an opportunity to offer some comments on issues of disarmament. The strategic approach to preventing proliferation is based on two fundamental commitments: the willingness of non-nuclear-weapon States not to acquire such weapons; and the decision of the nuclear-weapon States to gradually reduce their arsenals.

A greater number of States would probably possess nuclear weapons if a system intended to prevent proliferation did not exist. But that system has been unable to completely halt such proliferation. Some countries that are not parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are developing nuclear weapons programmes with total impunity, and true criminal networks have become involved in the black market for nuclear designs, technology and material with the same impunity, and even with the indulgence of some States.

In the area of disarmament, what we have is a history of missed opportunities for the reduction of nuclear threats. The window of opportunity that opened up with the end of the cold war was only partially exploited. Some studies estimate that more than one third of the nuclear destructive power that existed at the end of the cold war will remain in 2012. Furthermore, very little has been done to limit future arms races and the concept of deterrent force still holds all of its strategic value for the nuclear-weapon States.

If we want real progress in the area of disarmament tomorrow, it is imperative to begin today to create effective conditions for the prevention of proliferation. We are not referring only to stopping horizontal proliferation, meaning the rise of new nuclear-weapon States. It is also necessary to prevent and stop vertical proliferation, meaning the continuous development of new technologies that only encourage competition, mistrust and fear among States.

For that reason, we also cannot endorse the behaviour of some States that demand that others comply with their obligations stemming from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, while disregarding some of their own responsibilities. Both treaties form part of an intricate architecture of mutual trust that does not admit differential obligations. It is necessary to prevent both horizontal and vertical proliferation, to encourage the fulfilment of all obligations pursuant to those treaties, and to condemn any attempt to breach this mutual trust.

We believe it is necessary also to make progress on disarmament in order to create an environment conducive to non-proliferation, because there is very little incentive for non-proliferation in an international environment in which there is little progress in disarmament and weak guarantees that existing nuclear weapons will not be used.

In this sense, we share the belief that there is a need for a transparent, sustainable and credible plan for multilateral nuclear disarmament, as was suggested by British Secretary of State for Defence Desmond Browne when he addressed the Conference on Disarmament last month. We agree with him on the need to create a virtuous cycle where progress in disarmament and in non-proliferation can mutually reinforce each other.

Perhaps in this way it will be possible to stop the logic of recent decades, in which despite so many efforts, there has been vertical and horizontal proliferation but little progress in nuclear disarmament.

In this situation, the international community has an obligation to demand advances in disarmament, to improve norms and verification systems, and to take drastic action in the face of any threat of proliferation in the future. In the area of nuclear weapons, it is better to err on the side of caution; otherwise, we could be witnesses to an unprecedented holocaust.

Today, as in the past, Costa Rica respects the right of every State to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. But we consider this right to be contingent on the fulfilment of all international obligations in this

matter. In this respect, the right to enrich uranium is a legitimate activity if its scope and objectives are subject to complete international supervision through absolutely transparent processes. We believe that that is still not the case of the Iranian nuclear programme and for this reason we are obligated to support the resolution that we have voted on today. Despite this context which is we hardly find pleasant, we are very pleased with Iran's stated intentions to continue working with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to meet its requirements. We hope that we will soon see the day in which we can verify that Iran has met all of its obligations, and in which the international community can cooperate with Iran to promote the well-being of its people.

I would like to conclude by regretting the fact that they were invoking the delicate situation in Gaza and in southern Israel as a spearhead in a completely unrelated subject. Costa Rica spoke out in this Council to express its concern over the terrible humanitarian situation in the region and has also condemned attacks on territories in the south of Israel. Costa Rica has criticized the Council's silence on that matter, and we reject anew today's invocation of that situation with the intention of attacking the Council.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): As members will recall, Burkina Faso, since the beginning of the Council's consideration of this matter, has stated its reservations about considering a draft resolution before the publication of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Iran's nuclear programme, because, as a matter of principle, my country, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), recognizes every country's right to acquire nuclear technology for civilian purposes. It follows that we cannot support any activity of nuclear proliferation.

Having considered the report of the Director General of the IAEA, we note that, in the absence of full and complete cooperation by Iran, the Agency has been unable to clearly determine the precise nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. We deeply regret Iran's position, because all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty are bound to fully disclose such information. Our doubts are deepened by the fact that the report describes activities linked to uranium enrichment and the development of new-generation centrifuges. Moreover, the Agency has noted Iran's refusal to implement the provisions of its Additional Protocol relating to the speedy provision of descriptive information.

In view of all those facts, and with the sole purpose of encouraging Tehran to make a greater effort to cooperate fully with the IAEA, including by providing specific information on its nuclear programme, Burkina Faso voted in favour of the resolution. For my delegation, the purpose of these additional measures is not to choke or harm Iran — much less to outlaw it — but simply to encourage it to be more cooperative with the IAEA and to show transparency in its nuclear programme.

In spite of having endorsed this option, we remain convinced that dialogue with Iran must continue in order to persuade it, through negotiations, that its duty — and its interests — lie in full compliance with the NPT safeguards system with a view to regaining the trust of the international community.

In that spirit, we endorse the statement of the six countries, confirming their desire to promote further dialogue and cooperation with Iran. We find that initiative satisfactory and we fully support it, because we remain convinced that only through negotiation can the Iranian question be fully resolved.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium voted in favour of resolution 1803 (2008), and we welcome its adoption by a very large majority. Belgium took note with great interest of the statement issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, with the support of the European Union High Representative.

Belgium regrets that Iran has still not complied with the decisions of the Security Council aimed at the suspension of uranium-enrichment activities and projects linked to heavy water, or with measures set out by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Belgium notes that in his report of 22 February the Director General of the IAEA concludes again that he is not able to provide assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, or regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

Belgium considers that this new resolution is part of a gradual approach of adopting sanctions that are

proportionate, targeted and reversible; above all, we seek to urge the Iranian authorities to adopt a more cooperative and transparent position in order to restore trust. Belgium stresses that the path of good-faith negotiations remains open to Iran on the basis of the proposals made to it in June 2006.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama regrets that we have had once again to face the decision to impose sanctions on Iran. As we stated during prior negotiations, we hold that the imposition of coercive measures reflects a failure of diplomacy on this issue. I stress that this is a failure by all parties, not only those of us seeking clarity about the nature of the Iranian nuclear programme with a view to making substantive progress towards the resolution of this disturbing situation.

Our decision to vote in favour of today's resolution was based on the following reasoning. Iran has been a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) since 1970, and as such it must adhere to restrictions on the production, development and proliferation of nuclear weapons. Panama recognizes that, under the NPT, Iran has the right to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes and to carry out processes that are indispensable to that end, such as uranium enrichment. But the exercise of that right involves equally important obligations, in particular open and transparent inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of activities and processes linked to the peaceful use of atomic energy.

In that connection, it is timely to echo the words of the most recent report of the IAEA:

> "With regard to its current programme, Iran needs to continue to build confidence about its scope and nature. Confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme requires that the Agency be able to provide assurances not only regarding declared nuclear material, but, equally importantly, regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran".

The report goes on to say that

> "Although Iran has provided some additional detailed information about its current activities on an ad hoc basis, the Agency will not be in a position to make progress towards providing credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran before reaching some clarity about the nature of the alleged [green salt] studies, and without implementation of the Additional Protocol".

In short, as the report notes, "the Agency is not yet in a position to determine the full nature of Iran's nuclear programme".

Despite the noteworthy and commendable progress in the process, Panama believes that until we have comprehensive clarity about the present scope of its nuclear programme, Iran will not have fully met its obligations.

In conclusion, the Security Council unanimously required Iran to suspend its activities related to uranium enrichment. The IAEA report acknowledges that, "Contrary to the decisions of the Security Council, Iran has not suspended its enrichment related activities". The report goes on to enumerate the activities now being carried out by Iran in contravention of what has been stipulated.

Iran has not complied and continues to be in non-compliance with the mandate of the Security Council, thereby flouting the obligations that the Charter of the United Nations imposes on each and every Member State. It does not help Iran to say, as it did today, that it suspended the activities that it agreed to suspend. As stated in the report from which I have quoted today, Iran has not suspended the activities that it must suspend in fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter.

For the foregoing reasons, Panama decided to vote in favour of the draft resolution that was before us today. Nevertheless, we hope that this worrisome situation will be resolved soon. Nothing could make us happier than to avoid having Iran face the difficult consequences flowing from sanctions, thus sparing the rest of the world the unfortunate task of imposing new coercive measures.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): Croatia is a responsible member of all international organizations dealing with issues of international security cooperation, relating to both global and comparative security. For instance, as an active member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors, Croatia attaches the greatest importance to the implementation of the Treaty on the

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In that context, we are following closely the developments in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme. We fully share the concerns of the wider international community in that regard. With regard to the resolution adopted a short time ago, we had several points as guiding principles.

Every State has the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, but it must abide by international obligations. While some of the findings of the IAEA report are satisfactory, taken as a whole, the report does not paint a positive picture. On the contrary, the report is critical in that it clearly states that Tehran had avoided key questions regarding indications of a possible military dimension of its nuclear activities. As the Agency has stated, the failure of Iran to provide a clear response leaves no confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the programme. The IAEA has also stated that these are matters of serious concern that are critical to an assessment of a possible military dimension to Iran's nuclear programme. Moreover, Iran has also failed to implement the relevant provisions of resolution 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), and it has not suspended its enrichment-related activities and has started to develop new-generation centrifuges and related projects.

Therefore, in the light of the foregoing, the delegation of Croatia voted in favour of the draft resolution. We welcome its adoption. In addition, Croatia also welcomes the commitment of the Foreign Ministers of the six countries to continue all diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Russia supported the resolution just adopted. We are pleased to note that the serious work of the six countries and the incorporation of the opinions and proposals of a number of non-permanent members of the Council, led us to a text that is balanced and meets the tasks at hand.

The resolution is in fact a political signal to Iran of the need to cooperate with the international community by implementing the decisions of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Security Council. That signal should be understood in conjunction with the statement issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the six countries. It is important that the six countries be prepared to formulate additional proposals for talks, something from which Iran and the entire region can only benefit — economically, politically and in terms of security.

We note the recognition by the Council and the six countries of Iran's legitimate rights under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We confirm that, once confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme is restored, that programme will be treated in the same way as that of any non-nuclear State party.

Another point of principle is that today's decision by the Council, like resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), was taken under Chapter VII, Article 41, of the Charter of the United Nations. It therefore calls for no use of force whatsoever. There is a provision in the resolution that says that, if necessary, the Council will adopt further measures on an exclusively peaceful basis. We remain convinced that an effective solution to the Iranian nuclear problem can only be found in the political and diplomatic spheres.

Russia favours a search for fresh approaches to the talks. Together with partners from the six countries, we are prepared to facilitate a serious and concrete dialogue with Iran in order that all pending issues can be effectively resolved. We hope that Iran's leadership will carefully analyse the content of the present resolution and of the statement issued by the six Ministers for Foreign Affairs, and will choose to meet the requirements of the IAEA and the Security Council, continue active interaction with the Agency and help launch a negotiations process conducive to the settlement of the Iranian nuclear problem.

It is important that the members of the group of six countries show a consistent willingness to engage in constructive cooperation with Iran. The need for that approach has been borne out by the content of our discussion today in the Council and by the results of the vote on the resolution.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 2.55 p.m.